WHICH VERSION?

Authorized or Revised

PHILIP MAURO

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Author of

The World and Its God, The Number of Man, Life in the Word, Evolution at the Bar, etc.

HAMILTON BROS.
SCRIPTURE TRUTH DEPOT
120 Tremont St. Boston 9, Mass.

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Printed in the United States of America

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Introduction

THE purpose of this book is to set forth information concerning the Authorized and Revised Versions of the New Testament, information which should be shared by all Bible readers, but is in the possession of only a few in our day.

Our present inquiry is in regard to the many differences, some of them quite serious, between the "Authorized" or King James Version, first published in 1611, and the "Revised" Version of 1881. The total number of the departures of the latter from the former is over *thirty-six thousand.*

This raises some serious questions.

Why was such an enormous number of changes made? On what authority? What is their general character and effect? Briefly, do they give us a better Version, that is, one that brings us nearer to the original autographs of the inspired Writings? And is the Authorized Version so very defective as implied by such an enormous number of corrections?

Not only is this a matter of the highest consequence, but it is one as touching which the ordinary Bible reader would wish to have a well grounded opinion of his own. As a basis for

such an opinion he must have knowledge of the pertinent *facts;* for the experts, the textual critics, editors, and Greek scholars, differ and dispute among themselves; and their discussions and dissertations abound in matters so technical and abstruse that ordinary persons cannot follow them. Therefore the conflicting opinions of the experts serve only to becloud the subject for the common people.

The pertinent facts themselves are not difficult to understand; but they are inaccessible to most Bible readers. Therefore we are writing these pages with the object mainly of setting forth such facts concerning the two rival Versions, the sources whence they were respectively derived, and the circumstances attending the coming into existence of the Revised Version, as have served as a basis for the writer's own judgment. Those facts are not only supremely important, but are also absorbingly interesting. So it is not to a dry or a tedious discussion that we invite the reader of this book, but to one of lively interest.

As to which is the better of the two Versions of the English Bible there is of course a difference of opinion. Those who favor the modern Version will point to the fact that, during the three hundred years that have elapsed since the A. V. was translated, much material has been discovered whereby additional light is thrown upon the Text. They also refer to the advance-

ment in all departments of learning; and to the fact that the R. V. was the result of the labors of eminent scholars, who spent ten years upon its production. All this is true; and other general facts of like import could be mentioned, all of which served to prepare the minds of English-speaking people everywhere to give a most favorable reception to the new Version. How comes it then that the King James Version has not only maintained its place of supremacy, but of late years has forged further and further ahead of its rival? This surely is a matter worthy of our thoughtful consideration.

But before we begin to inquire into it, we wish briefly to direct the reader's attention to facts of great importance touching the Holy Scriptures in general, and the English Bible in particular.

The Bible as a Factor of Civilization

Everything pertaining to the Bible, and particularly every change proposed in the Bible *as we have had it in the English tongue,* is a matter of high consequence to all men—whether they realize it or not. For it is beyond all question that the Bible has been the chief factor in the *formation* of our Western Civilization, and also the chief factor in *conserving* it. Its unique influence upon the lives of individuals, and the standards of justice and morality which it has held up before the people, are what have served

to withstand the mighty disruptive forces of lawlessness and anarchy by which the very existence of society has been always menaced—and more so just now than ever before.

The influence of the Bible has contributed, and still contributes, far beyond all other forces combined, to the maintenance of government, and of all the principles of law, customs, usages, standards of ethics, education, and family life, that make for the welfare of nations, communities, and individuals.

This we can assert without fear of contradiction. For even so great an enemy of Christianity as Mr. H. G. Wells acknowledges that civilization owes both its origin and its preservation to the Bible. He has recently declared in print that "the civilization we possess could not have come into existence, and could not have been sustained, without it." Again he admits that "it is the Book that has held together the fabric of Western civilization;" that it has "unified and kept together great masses of people;" that it has been "the hand book of life to countless millions of men and women, it has explained the world to the mass of our people, and has given them moral standards and a form into which their consciences could work."

Here is testimony which is all the more valuable because it comes from one of the most prominent of the enemies of that faith which rests for its support upon the Bible; and we

wonder how any man, who is capable of grasping the facts thus admitted by Mr. Wells, can fail to see that a Book which has, through centuries of time, accomplished results so great in magnitude and so excellent in character, must needs be of super-human origin. The facts, which Mr. Wells and other infidels are constrained to admit, concerning the influence of the Bible, and concerning the extent, duration, and above all the character of that influence among the peoples of the world, cannot be predicated, even in a small measure, of any other book. So here we have, in the outstanding facts which even the enemies of Christ are constrained to acknowledge, proof enough of the Divine authorship of the Holy Scriptures.

The Bible in English

But what we wish specially to emphasize for our present purpose is that, when reference is made to the Bible and its influence, what is meant in most cases is the *English Version* thereof. For the undeniable fact is that the English Version of the Scriptures is the "Bible" to most of those who read or consult the Holy Scriptures; and the English Version has been, moreover, the basis for the translation of the Scriptures into many other languages and dialects.

From these facts, which are matters of common knowledge, it follows that whatever affects

the English Version of the Bible is of highest consequence to all the people of the world, even if we limit ourselves to the consideration merely of their temporal concerns. Therefore it behooves all of us who have at heart the purposes for which God has given us His holy Word, to acquaint ourselves, so far as we can, with the merits of the several English Versions, in order that we may have an intelligently formed and well grounded opinion upon the question which of these Versions, as a whole, is best calculated to accomplish the purposes of God, and to secure the welfare of human beings, both for time and for eternity.

For the thought of writing this book, and for some of the materials composing it, I am indebted to a pamphlet on "The Revised Version," by L. E. B., published by Elliot Stock, London.

Chapter I

The Several Versions

THE common Version of the Holy Bible in the English tongue is more than three hundred years old; for it first appeared in 1611. It is sometimes called the "King James Version," but more commonly the "Authorized Version." It is usually designated by the letters A. V.

In the year 1881 a new Version of the Bible in English appeared; and a second and final edition thereof was issued in 1885. This Version was the result of the labors of a Revision Committee, composed of English and American scholars, well acquainted with the original languages. The labors of the Revision Committee extended over a period of ten years. This Version is usually designated by the letters R. V.

Twenty years later (1901) another Version, embodying the readings preferred by the American members of the Revision Committee, was published in the United States. It is known as the "American Standard Version," and is designated by the letters A. S. V.

There are many differences between these two new Versions, both of which resulted from the

labors of the Revision Committee.* For example, in the American Version the Name LORD is changed throughout the Old Testament to JEHOVAH, which is the recognized English equivalent of the Hebrew original. This change we regard as a great improvement. But we shall not discuss herein the differences between the two modern Versions.

It should also be stated at the outset that our observations will be confined to the New Testament. The reason is that the differences of major importance which appear in the Revised Versions of the New Testament, and their importance is in some cases very great indeed, are not differences of *translation,* but are differences *in the Greek text* used as the basis of the translation, the text adopted by the Revisers of the 19th Century being different in many particulars from that which, three centuries previous, served as the basis of the A. V. In the case, however, of the Old Testament, the same Hebrew text served as the basis of both Versions. Therefore the changes made by the Revisers in the Old Testament are changes of *translation only;* and it is quite easy for anyone, with the help of a Hebrew Concordance, to form an opinion between the several translations of a passage. When, however, the original

* See "Preface to the Edition of 1885," and "Preface to the American Edition"; also the Appendix to the former, in which the readings preferred by the American members of the Committee were given.

text has been changed, he has no means of judging whether or not the change was warranted.

The Occasion for the R. V.

The Bible is the one Book in the world which is constantly under scrutiny; and the scrutiny to which it is subject is of the most searching kind, and from the keenest and best equipped minds in the world—and this, by the way, is another strong, though indirect, proof that the Bible is not a human book. This continuous and microscopical examination of the Bible, and of all the circumstances and conditions connected with the origin of its various parts, has been carried on both by its friends, who value all the information they can gather concerning it, and also by its enemies, who are unremitting in their search for facts which might be used to discredit its statements or impugn its accuracy.

This unceasing scrutiny extends not only to every word of the original text, but to the more minute questions of prefix, termination, spelling, tense of verbs, and even to the very smallest matters, such as the placing of an accent. It would seem as if every generation of men was impelled, as by some strong but inscrutable influence, thus to recognize the importance of every "jot and tittle" of this Book of books.

As the result of this constant and painstaking study of the Scriptures during centuries following the appearance of the A. V., it became

increasingly evident that, notwithstanding the excellencies of that great and admirable work, there were particulars wherein, for one cause or another, it admitted of (and indeed called for) correction. For those who translated it, though godly and scholarly, and though assisted, as we doubt not they were in large measure, by the Holy Spirit, were but human, and therefore compassed with infirmity. Moreover, in the course of the years following the completion of their labors, discoveries were made which affected the original text of the New Testament, and other discoveries which threw fresh light upon the meaning of obscure words and difficult passages. It was found also that corrections in translation were demanded here and there, particularly in regard to the tenses of verbs.

And beside all that, we have to take into consideration the fact (for which the translators of the A. V. were in no wise responsible) that changes had meanwhile occurred in the meanings of not a few English words and expressions.

For all these reasons it appeared desirable that our excellent and justly admired Authorized Version should have such a revision as that for which the Revision Committee was appointed in the year 1871. For it should be understood that what was contemplated by those who were responsible for the appointment

of that Committee was simply a *revision* of the Version of 1611; and had the Committee confined themselves to the task actually entrusted to them, and kept within the limits of the instructions given to them, the results of their long labors would no doubt have been a gain and a blessing to all the English-speaking nations, and through them to all mankind. But instead of a Revised Version of the long accepted English Bible, the Committee brought forth (so far at least as the New Testament was concerned) a *New Version.* This fact was not disclosed by them. The "Preface to the Edition of A. D. 1885" gives no indication of it; but through the vigilance of certain godly and scholarly men (Dean Burgon in particular) the important fact was discerned and brought to light that the Committee had produced, not a "Revised" Version (though that was the name given to it) but a *New* Version, which was a translation of a "New Greek Text." The importance of this fact will be made evident as we proceed. It will also be a matter of much interest to show the sources from which this "New Greek Text" was derived, and the means whereby its adoption by the Committee (as to which there was considerable mystery at the time) was brought about.

The Present Situation

It is now more than forty years—the Scriptural period of full probation—since the R. V. appeared; and as we contemplate the existing situation (in the year 1924) the most conspicuous fact that presents itself to our view is that the New Version (in either or both its forms) has not superseded the A. V., and that there is not the faintest indication that it will ever do so. Indeed it appears that the R. V. is declining, rather than gaining, in favor, and that with Bible users of all classes, from the most scholarly to the most unlearned.* This is a fact of much significance, and due consideration should be given to it in any attempt one might make to arrive at a just estimate of the relative values of the rival Versions. What is the explanation of this fact? It is not that the Old Version did not and does not admit of corrections and improvements. Nor is it that the Revisers did not make them; for it cannot be denied that the R. V. contains many improved readings. Yet for all that, as the experience of a whole generation has now conclusively demonstrated, the A. V. retains, and in all probability will continue to retain, its long undisputed place as the standard English Bible.

This failure of the new Versions, or either of them, to displace the old, is attributed by some

* See the Reports of Bible Societies on p. 117 of this volume.

to the supposed conservatism of people in general, and to their assumed reluctance to accept changes of any sort. But we should say the truth in this regard is rather that people in our time are unduly ready, and even eager, to welcome every kind of a change. Radical innovations are the order of the day. On every hand we see the "old" being discarded for the "new" and the "up-to-date;" and in no department of human affairs is this eagerness for change more manifest than in the field of literature (if that word may be properly applied to what people read now-a-days).

Moreover, the generation of those who had known only the A. V., and who therefore might have been disposed to cling to it for that reason alone, is now passed away; and the fact which confronts us is that whereas those living at that time (1881-1885) seemed quite ready and willing to welcome the R. V., fully expecting it to be a real improvement upon the older Version, the almost unanimous judgment of the next succeeding generation is that the older Version is to be preferred.

But, looking beyond and above the sphere of mere human judgment, and recognizing the superintendence of the Spirit of God in all that has to do with the Word of God, we feel warranted in concluding from the facts stated above that there are Divine reasons for the retention of the A. V. in the favor of the people of God.

We will try, therefore, to point out some of those reasons.

The Original Text

Very few of those who read the Scriptures have any idea how much depends upon the all-important matter of settling the Greek Text of the New Testament, or how many and how great the difficulties involved therein. Of those who give any thought at all to the matter the larger number seem to suppose that there exists somewhere an acknowledged original Text of the New Testament, and that the work of preparing an English Version is merely a matter of the correct translation of that Greek Text. But the case is far otherwise; for the first part of the work is to settle the Greek Text from which the translation is to be made; and this is a matter of immense difficulty, for the reason that the original materials from which the Text must be constructed embrace upwards of a thousand manuscripts. Some of these contain the whole, or nearly the whole, of the New Testament; and the rest contain a part, some more, some less, thereof. Of these manuscripts a few are supposedly as early as the fourth or fifth century, and others as late as the fourteenth.

Then there are also certain ancient *Versions, or Translations,* as the Latin, Syriac and Coptic, whose testimony as to disputed passages must be considered, particularly for the reason that

some of them are older than the earliest Greek manuscripts known to exist at the present time. The most noted of these is the Peschito, or Syriac Version, which dates from very early in the Christian era, probably from the second century.

The original materials for the making of a Greek Text embrace also numerous *quotations of Scripture* found in the copious writings of the "church fathers," which have survived to our day. This is an important source of information; for those quotations are so numerous, and they cover so much ground in the aggregate, that the greater part of the Text of the entire New Testament could be constituted from them alone.

But no two of these thousands of manuscripts are exactly alike; and every discrepancy raises a distinct question requiring separate investigation and a separate decision. While, however, the precise reading of thousands of passages is affected by these differences, it must not be supposed that there is any uncertainty whatever as to the teaching and testimony of the New Testament in its entirety. For the consoling facts in that regard are: (1) that the vast majority of the variant readings are so slight (a mere question of a single letter, or an accent, or a prefix, or a case ending) as not to raise any question at all concerning the true sense of the passage; and (2) that the sum of *all* the variant

readings taken together does not give ground for the slightest doubt as to any of the fundamental points of faith and doctrine. In other words, the very worst Text that could be constructed from the abundant materials available would not disturb any of the great truths of the Christian faith.

It will be seen, therefore, that the making of a Greek Text, as the first step in producing an English Version, involves the immense labor of examining, for every disputed word and passage, the numerous manuscripts, ancient Versions, and quotations now known to exist, and also the making of a decision in each case where there is a conflict between the various witnesses. This is a highly complicated task; and for the proper performance of it *other qualities besides Greek and English scholarship are required.* For example, one must settle at the outset what degree of credibility is to be imputed to the respective manuscripts; and this is where, in our opinion, the compilers of the Greek Text used as the basis for the R. V. went far astray, with the result that the Text adopted by them was much inferior to that used in the translation of the A. V. Our reasons for this opinion, which will be given later on, are such as to be easily understood.

In this connection it is important to observe that no amount of care in the work of translation will tend to cure defects in the original

Text; but that, on the contrary, the more faithful the translation the more effectually will the errors of the Text be carried into the resulting Version.

The Revision Committee Not Instructed to Fashion a New Greek Text

Moreover, it is to be noted in this connection that the instructions under which the Revisers acted did not contemplate the making of a New Greek Text; nor did they have the qualifications needed for such a complicated task. The reader will be astonished, we venture to predict, when he comes to learn (as we propose to show later on) the mode of procedure whereby, in this case, that "New Greek Text" was fashioned. But at this point we merely direct attention to the fact that the Committee was instructed to undertake "A Revision of the *Authorized* Version," with a view to "the removal of plain and clear errors," and that the first rule was "To introduce *as few alterations as possible* into the text of the Authorized."

This prompts us to ask, if 36,000 alterations were the fewest possible for the Revisers to introduce, what would they have done had a perfectly free hand been given them?

As Regards the Work of Translation

Furthermore, we believe it can be clearly shown that the work of translation in the case

of the R. V. is as a whole much inferior to that of the A. V. (notwithstanding the many improved readings given in the R. V.) insomuch that, as one competent authority has said, the later version is characterized by "bad English everywhere."

The Hebrew Text of the Old Testament

As already stated, the difficulties attending the Greek text of the New Testament do not exist in connection with the Old Testament, the original of which is in the Hebrew tongue. For there is but a single Standard Hebrew text, the "Massoretic Text," which is recognized by both Jewish and Christian authorities as the true Text of the Hebrew Scriptures.

Chapter II

The Various Greek Texts

WE HAVE spoken briefly of the difficulties that must be met by those who undertake to compile, from the scattered and diverse original "sources," a Greek Text of the New Testament. That great task has, nevertheless, been undertaken by able scholars at different times, and, as the outcome of their labors, there are in existence at the present time several complete texts. We will now give a brief account of the most important of them.

Stephens (A. D. 1550)

The Text of Stephens is that which served as the basis of the A. V. In its production the compiler was guided in large measure, though not exclusively, by the comparatively recent manuscripts (ninth, tenth, and eleventh centuries) which had been in use in various churches of Europe, Asia and Africa.

It might be supposed that Stephens was at a disadvantage with respect to later compilers in that he did not have the benefit of the manuscripts, particularly the Vatican and Sinaitic, which were available to later editors, as Tisch-

endorf, Tregelles and Westcott and Hort. But the fact is, and this we hope to make quite plain, that the comparative excellence of the Text of Stephens (and the Elzevir or *Textus Receptus* —see next sub-heading below) is due in no small degree to the fact that in its composition the Vatican and Sinaitic Mss. were not consulted.

The comparatively late Mss., from which the Stephens and Elzevir texts were mainly compiled, were, of course, copies of older ones, which were in time used up, and which themselves were copies of others still more ancient. In all this copying and re-copying, there would inevitably have crept in the various errors to which copyists are liable. Moreover, in some cases there were alterations purposely made, from one motive or another. When an error crept into a copy, or was purposely introduced, it would naturally be perpetuated in copies made from that one; and thus variations from the original would tend to multiplication. There was, however, a check upon this tendency. For such was the reverence paid to the sacred Text, and such the desire that copies used in the churches should be pure, that every opportunity would be embraced for comparing one Text with another; and where differences were observed there would be naturally an investigation for the purpose of establishing the true reading. Thus, by examination and comparison of a moderate number—say ten or twenty—com-

paratively late manuscripts from widely separated points, it would be possible to establish, almost to a certainty, the original reading of any disputed passage, or, if it were a passage whose authenticity as a whole was questioned, to decide whether it were genuine Scripture or not.

Elzevir or "Textus Receptus" (1624)

This edition, with which the name and fame of the great Erasmus are associated, has been for centuries, and still is, the best known and most widely used of all the Greek Texts. While this justly famous edition is later by some years than the publication of the A. V., the differences between it and its immediate predecessor, the Stephens edition, are so few and unimportant that the two may be regarded for all practical purposes as one and the same. Thus all the scholarship back of the *Textus Receptus* is an endorsement of the Text which served as the basis for the translation of our A. V.

It is apparent from what has been said already that if the Revisers of the 19th century had used the same Greek Text, either as it stood, or with such corrections as might seem justified by discoveries made subsequently to 1624, they would have given us a Version having *a comparatively small number of changed readings.* In fact it is within bounds to say

that, if the Revisers had given us simply a *corrected translation* of the *Textus Receptus,* instead of a translation of an entirely "New Greek Text," we should not have more than a small fraction, say *less than ten percent,* of the changes found in the R. V. And what is more, *not one* of those changes which are regarded as serious, and against which such a storm of protest has been raised (and that from men of the highest scholarship and deepest piety) would have been made. In that case it is likely also that the changes would have commended themselves to the majority of discriminating Bible users.

Therefore we should take careful note of the principles that were adopted, and of the materials that were used in the compilation of later Greek Texts of the New Testament. Of the most important of these we shall proceed now to speak briefly.

Griesbach's Edition (1805)

This Text appeared about 150 years after the Elzevir edition. In the meantime an enormous amount of new materials had been gathered and was available for whatever help it might afford in the effort to arrive at the true original reading. But the added mass of evidence made the task of examination the more laborious; and moreover, it raised again and again the difficult

question of the *relative credibility* of conflicting witnesses.

Griesbach, in the compilation of his text, proceeded upon a plan and principles of his own, which need not be here described. In cases of doubt and difficulty he seemed to follow the *Textus Receptus*. Hence his departures were not serious; and in any case his Text is not regarded today as having any special authority.

Lachmann (1842-1850)

This editor appears to have been the first to act upon the theory or principle that *the more ancient* the manuscript the more worthy of credence. The extent to which this idea has been allowed to control in the settling of disputed readings, without regard to other weighty considerations whereby the credibility of the contradictory witnesses should properly have been determined, is very extraordinary. This matter calls for special attention, not only because of the important part it played in settling the Text of the R. V., but because it seems to be quite generally taken for granted that the older the manuscript the more worthy to be believed where there is a conflict of testimony. We propose, therefore, to examine this rule of evidence with some care later on; and in that connection we will endeavor to show why we believe that the principles which controlled in the compilation of the *Textus Receptus* are far more con-

formable to the sound rules of evidence, and hence more likely to lead to right conclusions, than that adopted by Lachmann and his successors.

Lachmann seems to have conceived a prejudicial dislike for the Received Text, and (as a good authority expresses it) to have "set to work to form a text independent of that, right or wrong. He started with the theory of *ancient evidence only,* thus sweeping away many copies and much evidence, because they dated below his fixed period." In fact he did not seek to arrive at the original inspired Writings, but merely "to recover the Text *as it was in the fourth century.*"

This principle, first adopted by Lachmann, and followed with well-nigh calamitous results by his successors, including Drs. Westcott and Hort (who were responsible for the Text which underlies the R. V.) is based upon the tacit assumption that there existed in the fourth century a Greek Text which was generally accepted, and which was also virtually pure. But it is now recognized that the very worst corruptions of the original Writings are those which occurred prior thereto.

And not only so, but, at the time of the appearance of the R. V. Drs. Westcott and Hort put forth an elaborate explanation of the principles adopted by them in the making of their "New Greek Text" (which up to that time had

been privately circulated among the Revisionists, and under injunctions of strictest secrecy) and in it they admitted that the *Textus Receptus* is substantially identical with the Text used in the Churches of Syria and elsewhere *in and prior to the fourth century.* To this important feature of the case we will refer more in detail later on; for it proves that the authors of the Text adopted by the Revisers, while appealing to the principle of "ancient evidence" as the reason for their departures from the Received Text, have made admissions which show that they in fact acted directly contrary to that principle.

Now, as to the assumption that because a given Text or Ms. dated from the fourth century it would be purer than one of later date, we quote the following statement of one who was generally regarded as the ablest textual critic of those days, Dr. Frederick H. A. Scrivener, who, in his "*Introduction* to the Text of the N. T." (3d ed. p. 511) says: "It is no less true to fact than paradoxical in sound that the worst corruptions to which the New Testament has ever been subjected originated within a hundred years after it was composed; that Irenæus and the African Fathers, and the whole Western church, with a portion of the Syrian, had far inferior manuscripts to those employed by Stunica, or Erasmus, or Stephens, thirteen cen-

turies later, when moulding the *Textus Receptus.*"

But Lachmann proceeded in disregard of this fact, and no doubt because ignorant of it. He thus set a bad example; and unfortunately his example has been followed by editors who came after him, men of great learning unquestionably, and having accurate knowledge of early Greek, but apparently knowing little of the history of the various Greek manuscripts, and nothing at all of the laws of evidence, and how to deal with problems involving the investigation of a mass of conflicting testimony.

Tischendorf (1865-1872)

This scholar, whose great abilities and unremitting labors are widely recognized, has had a dominating influence in the formation of the modern Text. Tischendorf proceeded upon a plan which we give in his own words: "The text is to be sought only from *ancient evidence,* and especially from Greek Mss., but without neglecting the testimonies of Versions and Fathers." From this we see that Tischendorf thoroughly committed himself to the principle of giving the "ancient evidence" the deciding voice in all disputed readings. That he should have adopted this principle was specially unfortunate because of the circumstance that Tischendorf himself was the discoverer of the famous *Codex Sinaiticus* (of which we shall have

occasion to speak more particularly later on) which manuscript is reputed the most ancient but one of all the now existing Greek manuscripts of the N. T., and which therefore, upon the principle referred to, is entitled to the highest degree of credibility. But whether or not the Sinaitic Ms. is the most ancient of all now known to exist, it is, beyond any doubt whatever, the most defective, corrupt, and untrustworthy. Our reasons for this assertion (reasons which are ample to establish it) will be given later on. We wish at this point merely to note the fact (leaving the proof thereof for a subsequent chapter) that the most serious of the many departures of the R. V. from the A. V. are due to the unhappy conjunction of an unsound principle of evidence and the fortuitous discovery, by a scholar who had accepted that principle, of a very ancient Greek Ms. of the N. T., a Ms. which, despite its unquestioned antiquity, turns out to be about the worst and most "scandalously corrupt" of all the Greek Texts now known to exist.

Tregelles

This editor was contemporary with Tischendorf. As stated in his own words his purpose was "to give the text on the authority of *the oldest* Mss. and Versions, and with the aid of the earlier citations, so as to present, so far as

possible, the text *commonly received in the fourth century.*"

This, it will be observed, is substantially the plan proposed by Lachmann; and these are the precedents which seem to have mainly influenced Westcott and Hort in the compilation of their Text, which is virtually the Text from which the R. V. was made.

Dr. Scrivener says (*Introduction* p. 342): "Lachmann's text seldom rests on more than four Greek Codices, very often on three, not infrequently on two, sometimes on only one." His fallacy, which was adopted by Tregelles, necessarily proved fatal to the text prepared by the latter, who in fact acted upon the astounding assumption that "eighty-nine ninetieths" of our existing manuscripts and other authorities might safely be rejected, in order that we might be free to follow a few early documents of bad repute.

This tendency in a wrong direction found a still further development in Tischendorf, and came to full fruition in Westcott and Hort, who were allowed to fashion according to their own ideas the Greek Text of the R. V.

Alford

The work of this editor (who is rated high as a Greek scholar, though we know not how competent he was to decide questions of fact where there was conflict of testimony) was subsequent

to that of the two preceding editors. Concerning their work he says that "If Tischendorf has run into a fault on the side of speculative hypotheses concerning the origins of readings found in those Mss., it must be confessed that Tregelles has sometimes erred on the (certainly far safer) side of scrupulous adherence to the more literal evidence of the ancient Mss." Alford's text was constructed—to state it in his own words—"by following in all ordinary cases the united or preponderating testimony of the most ancient authorities." Later evidence was taken into consideration by him only when "the most ancient authorities did not agree or preponderate."

It seems not to have occurred to this learned man, any more than to the others, that mere antiquity was not a safe test of reliability where witnesses were in conflict, and that a late copy of a *correct original* should be preferred to a corrupt Ms. of earlier date.

Chapter III

The Ancient Codices. The Vatican Codex and the Sinaitic

THIS brings us to the consideration of those "ancient manuscripts" or "codices,"* as they are usually called, to which the modern editors have attributed so high a degree of credibility, and by which their decisions in the construction of a Greek Text for the R. V. have been so largely influenced; and especially to the consideration of the two most venerable of all the existing witnesses to the sacred text, namely, the *Codex Vaticanus,* so called because its repository is the papal palace (the Vatican) at Rome, and the *Codex Sinaiticus,* so called because it was discovered by Tischendorf in a monastery on Mt. Sinai in Arabia. These Mss. are supposed, from the character of the writing, and from other internal evidences, to date from the fourth century. The next oldest are supposed to date from the fifth century. Hence, upon the generally accepted theory to which we

* *Codex* is a name given to any ancient manuscript book. There are about 114 known "codices" of the Bible, that is manuscripts on parchment in uncial characters (all capital letters run together) dating from the 4th to the 10th century; and about twelve hundred manuscripts known as *cursives* (*i. e.*, written in a running hand) between the 9th and 16th centuries, containing the Gospels, besides about five hundred manuscripts containing the rest of the N. T.

have referred above, the testimony of the two codices just named is to be accepted as decisive in the case of disputed readings. Therefore, the Revisers of 1881 committed themselves to the leading of these two "ancient witnesses." Did they lead towards or away from the true text of the inspired Writings? That is the deeply important matter into which we propose now to inquire.

In addition to the Codex Vaticanus and the Codex Sinaiticus, there are three other very ancient Mss. These are:

1. *Codex Alexandrinus.* This Ms. has been kept for a long time in the British Museum in London. It contains all the Gospels (except small parts of Matthew and John) and all the rest of the N. T. except 2 Cor. 4:13-12:6 (fifth century).

2. *Codex Ephraemi,* kept in Paris, containing only portions of the Gospels, the Acts, Epistles and Revelation (fifth century).

3. *Codex Bezae,* kept at Cambridge, England, containing nearly all the Gospels and nothing else of the N. T. except portions of Acts (sixth century). It has a very bad reputation, as fully exposed by Dean Burgon. No editor appears to attach importance to it.

The Discovery of the Mt. Sinai Ms.

This famous Codex (with fac-similes of the handwriting, and with an account of its dis-

covery) is published in full in Dr. Scrivener's work entitled "A Full Collation of the Codex Sinaiticus" (1864).

Constantine Tischendorf, a noted German scholar, who was indefatigable in the quest of old manuscripts, was visiting, in the year 1844, a monastery on Mt. Sinai, and in the course of that visit he chanced to find one day, among the waste, some leaves of vellum which, upon inspection, were found to contain parts of the Septuagint Version of the O. T. in a script which indicated that the Ms. was of great antiquity.

In describing his famous discovery Tischendorf says:

"I perceived in the middle of the great hall a large and wide basket, full of old parchments; and the librarian informed me that two heaps of papers like this, mouldered by reason of age, had been already committed to the flames. What was my surprise to find among this heap of documents a considerable number of sheets of a copy of the Old Testament in Greek, which seemed to me to be one of the most ancient I had ever seen."

The monks allowed him to take forty-five of the sheets. But nothing more transpired until fifteen years later, when he again visited the monastery, this time under the direct patronage of the Czar of Russia. And then he was shown a bulky roll of parchment leaves, which included, among other manuscripts of lesser im-

portance, the Codex now known as the Sinaitic.

Naturally enough Dr. Tischendorf was highly elated by his discovery. Indeed his enthusiasm was unbounded. He says, "I knew that I held in my hands the most precious Biblical treasure in existence;" and he considered this discovery to be "greater than that of the Koh-i-nor of the Queen of England."

As usual in such cases this important "find" made a great stir, especially amongst those who devote themselves to the study of antiquity. We are all aware of the marked tendency of human nature to exaggerate the importance of every "find." Examples of this sort greet us from time to time. The discovery of the tomb of an Egyptian king is regarded as a matter of such supreme interest to all the world, that even trivial details connected with it are communicated by cable to the ends of the earth, and are given prominence in the daily newspapers. Thus an ancient article recently exhumed from the rubbish of a long buried city will oftentimes start a wave of excitement throughout the world; whereas an article of identical sort, known to have been in existence for some time, would be treated with complete indifference. We need not wonder, therefore, that the great scholar was carried away by his chance discovery, and that he succeeded in impressing upon others also his own idea of the surpassing importance of his "find."

Dean Burgon, speaking of Tischendorf and his discovery, aptly remarks:

"Happy in having discovered (in 1859) an uncial Codex, second in antiquity only to the oldest before known (the Vatican Codex), and strongly resembling that famous fourth century Codex, he suffered his judgment to be overpowered by the circumstance. He at once remodelled his 7th edition *(i. e.,* the 7th edition of his Greek Text of the New Testament) in 3,505 places, to the scandal of the Science of Comparative Criticism, as well as to his own grave discredit for discernment and consistency."

Evidently then, Tischendorf was carried off his feet by the subjective influence of his discovery; for he at once surrendered his judgment to this particular Ms., easily persuading himself that, because of its apparent antiquity, and without regard to any other considerations, it must needs be right in every instance where it differed from later manuscripts.

Thus, having fully committed himself to that view, he naturally adhered to it thereafter.

Unfortunately, however, the weight of his great influence affected the whole school of Comparative Textual Criticism. For Dean Burgon goes on to say:

"But in fact the infatuation which prevails to this hour (1883) in this department of sacred science can only be spoken of as incredible."

And he proceeds to show, by proofs which fill many pages "that the one distinctive tenet of the three most famous critics since 1831 (Lachmann, Tregelles and Tischendorf) has been a superstitious reverence for what is found in the same little handful of early (but not the earliest, nor yet of necessity the purest) documents."

In this connection it should be always borne in mind that those text-makers who profess to adopt as their controlling principle the acceptance on disputed points of the testimony of "the most ancient manuscripts," have not acted consistently with that principle. For the fact is that, in the compilation of their Greek Texts they have not really followed the most ancient manuscripts, but have been controlled *by two manuscripts only*. Those two are followed even against the counter evidence of all other available manuscripts, amounting to over a thousand, some of which are practically of equal age, and against the evidence also of Versions and of quotations from the writings of "fathers" much older than the two Codices referred to. But to this feature of our subject we expect to return.

Chapter IV

Characteristics of the Two Oldest Manuscripts

THE principle which the modern editors have adopted, namely, that of following the oldest manuscripts in settling all questions of doubtful or disputed readings, throws us back upon the two Codices (Vaticanus and Sinaitic) which, though not dated, are regarded by all competent antiquarians as belonging to the fourth century; and its practical effect is to make those two solitary survivors of the first four Christian centuries the final authorities, where they agree (which is not always the case), upon all questions of the true Text of Scripture.

Therefore it behooves us to inquire with the utmost care into the character of these two ancient witnesses, and to acquaint ourselves with all available facts whereby their trustworthiness may be tested. And this inquiry is necessary, regardless of what may be our opinion concerning the principle of "ancient evidence only," which we propose to examine later on. For what now confronts us is the fact that those two fourth century Codices have had the deciding voice in the settling of the Greek Text

of the R. V. and are responsible for practically all the departures from the Received Text to which serious objection has been made. Thus, Canon Cook in his authoritative work on "The Revised Version of the First Three Gospels" says:

"The two oldest Mss. are responsible for nearly all the readings which we have brought under consideration—readings which, when we look at them individually, and still more when we regard them collectively, inflict most grievous damage upon our Lord's words and works."

And again:

"By far the greatest number of innovations, including those which give the severest shocks to our minds, are adopted on the testimony of *two manuscripts*, or even of one manuscript, against the distinct testimony of all other manuscripts, uncial and cursive. . . . The Vatican Codex, sometimes alone, but generally in accord with the Sinaitic, is responsible for *nine-tenths* of the most striking innovations in the R. V."

Dean Burgon, whom we shall have occasion to quote largely because of his mastery of the entire subject, after having spent five and a half years "laboriously collating the five old uncials throughout the Gospels," declared at the completion of his prodigious task that—

"So manifest are the disfigurements jointly and exclusively exhibited by the two codices (Vatican and Sinaitic) that, instead of accepting them as two independent witnesses to the inspired original, we are constrained to regard them as little more than a single reproduction of one and the same scandalously corrupt and comparatively late copy."

The Many Corrections of the Sinaitic Ms.

Turning our attention first to the Codex Sinaiticus, we would lay stress upon a matter which, in our judgment, has a decisive bearing upon the all-important question of the trustworthiness of that ancient manuscript. And we are the more urgent to impress this particular matter upon the consideration of our readers because—notwithstanding its controlling importance—it has been practically ignored in such discussions of the subject as have come under our eye.

What we now refer to is the fact that, since this document was first inscribed, it has been made the subject of no less than *ten different attempts at revision and correction.* The number of these attempts is witnessed by the different chirographies of the revisers, and the centuries in which they were respectively made can be approximated by the character of the different hand-writings by which the several sets of corrections were carried out.

Dr. Scrivener published (in 1864) "A Full Collation of the Codex Sinaiticus," with an

explanatory introduction in which he states, among other facts of interest, that "The Codex is covered with such alterations"— *i. e.,* alterations of an obviously correctional character— "brought in by *at least ten different revisers,* some of them systematically spread over every page, others occasional, or limited to separate portions of the Ms., many of these being contemporaneous with the first writer, but for the greater part belonging to the sixth or seventh century."

We are sure that every intelligent reader will perceive, and with little effort, the immense significance of this feature of the Sinaitic Codex. Here is a document which the Revisers have esteemed (and that solely because of its antiquity) to be so pure that it should be taken as a standard whereby all other copies of the Scriptures are to be tested and corrected. Such is the estimate of certain scholars of the 19th century. But it bears upon its face the proof that those in whose possession it had been, *from the very first, and for some hundreds of years thereafter,* esteemed it to be so impure as to require correction in every part.

Considering the great value to its owner of such a manuscript (it is on vellum of the finest quality) and that he would be most reluctant to consent to alterations in it except the need was clearly apparent, it is plain that this much admired Codex bears upon its face the most incon-

testible proof of its corrupt and defective character.

But more than that, Dr. Scrivener tells us that the evident purpose of the thorough-going revision which he places in the 6th or 7th century was to make the Ms. conform to manuscripts in vogue at that time which were "far nearer to our modern *Textus Receptus.*"

The evidential value of these numerous attempts at correcting the Sinaitic Codex, and of the plainly discernible purpose of the most important of those attempts is such that, by all the sound rules and principles of evidence, this "ancient witness," so far from tending to raise doubts as to the trustworthiness and textual purity of the Received Text, should be regarded as affording strong confirmation thereof.

From these facts therefore we deduce: *first* that the impurity of the Codex Sinaiticus, in every part of it, was fully recognized by those best acquainted with it—and that from the very beginning until the time when it was finally cast aside as worthless for any practical purpose; and *second* that the Text recognized in those days as the standard Text, and by which the defective Codex now so highly rated by scholars was corrected, was one that agreed with our *Textus Receptus.* It is most surprising that facts which affect so profoundly the evidential value of the Codex Sinaiticus, facts which indeed change it from a hostile to a friendly wit-

ness (as regards the Received Text) should have been so completely disregarded.

The Work of an Incompetent Scribe

But there are other characteristics of this old Ms. which have to be taken into consideration if a correct estimate of its evidential value is to be reached. Thus, there are internal evidences that lead to the conclusion that it was the work of a scribe who was singularly careless, or incompetent, or both. In this Ms. the arrangement of the lines is peculiar, there being four columns on each page, each line containing about twelve letters—all capitals run together. There is no attempt to end a word at the end of a line, for even words having only two letters as *en, ek,* are split in the middle, the last letter being carried over to the beginning of the next line, though there was ample room for it on the line preceding. This and other peculiarities give us an idea of the character and competence of the scribe.

But more than that, Dr. Scrivener says: "This manuscript must have been derived from one in which the lines were similarly divided, since the writer occasionally omits just the number of letters which would suffice to fill a line, and that to the utter ruin of the sense; as if his eye had heedlessly wandered to the line immediately below." Dr. Scrivener cites instances "where complete lines are omitted,"

and others "where the copyist passed in the middle of a line to the corresponding portion of the line below."

From this it is evident that the work of copying was done by a scribe who was both heedless and incompetent. A careful copyist would not have made the above, and other, mistakes so frequently; and only the most incompetent would have failed to notice, upon reading over the page, and to correct, omissions which utterly destroyed the sense.

Dr. Scrivener's judgment on this feature of the case is entitled to the utmost confidence, not only because of his great ability as a textual critic, but because, being impressed, as all antiquarians were, with the importance of Tischendorf's discovery, it was solely from a sheer sense of duty and honesty, and with manifest reluctance, that he brought himself to point out the defects of the manuscript. Therefore, the following admission made by him carries much weight:

"It must be confessed indeed that the Codex Sinaiticus abounds with similar errors of the eye and pen, to an extent not unparalleled, but happily rather unusual in documents of first rate importance; so that Tregelles has freely pronounced that 'the state of the text, as proceeding from the first scribe, may be regarded as *very rough*.'"

Speaking of the character of the two oldest Mss. Dean Burgon says:

"The impurity of the text exhibited by these codices is not a question of opinion but of fact. . . . In the Gospels alone Codex B (Vatican) leaves out words or whole clauses no less than 1,491 times. It bears traces of careless transcription on every page. Codex Sinaiticus 'abounds with errors of the eye and pen to an extent not indeed unparalleled, but happily rather unusual in documents of first-rate importance.' On many occasions 10, 20, 30, 40 words are dropped through very carelessness. Letters and words, even whole sentences, are frequently written twice over, or begun and immediately cancelled; while that gross blunder, whereby a clause is omitted because it happens to end in the same words as the clause preceding, occurs no less than 115 times in the New Testament."

In enumerating and describing the five ancient Codices now in existence, Dean Burgon remarks that four of these, and especially the Vatican and Sinaitic Mss. "have, within the last twenty years, established a tyrannical ascendancy over the imagination of the critics which can only be fitly spoken of as a blind superstition." Those ancient Codices have indeed been blindly followed, notwithstanding that they differ "not only from ninety-nine out of a hundred of the whole body of extant Mss. besides, but *even from one another.* This last circumstance, obviously fatal to their corporate pretensions, is unaccountably overlooked. As

said of the two false witnesses that came to testify against Christ, so it may be said of these witnesses who are brought forward at this late day to testify against the Received Text, "But neither so did their witness agree together."

The Number and Kinds of Differences

As a sufficient illustration of the many differences between these two Codices and the great body of other Mss. we note that, in the Gospels alone, Codex Vaticanus differs from the Received Text in the following particulars: It omits at least 2,877 words; it adds 536 words; it substitutes 935 words; it transposes 2,098 words; and it modifies 1,132; making a total of 7,578 verbal divergences. But the Sinaitic Ms. is *even worse,* for its total divergences in the particulars stated above amount to *nearly nine thousand.*

Summing up the case against these two fourth century Codices (with which he includes the Beza, supposedly of the sixth) Dean Burgon solemnly assures us, and "without a particle of hesitation, that they are *three of the most scandalously corrupt copies extant;*" that they "exhibit the *most shamefully mutilated* texts which are anywhere to be met with;" that they "have become (by whatever process, for their history is wholly unknown) the depositories of the largest amount of *fabricated readings,* ancient *blunders,* and *intentional perversions of truth,*

which are discoverable in any known copies of the Word of God" (italics in the original).

These are strong statements, but the facts on which they are based seem fully to warrant them. Therefore it matters not what specific excellencies might be attributed to the Revised Version of the New Testament, the fact that the underlying Greek Text was fashioned in conformity to the Mss. referred to in the above quoted paragraph is reason enough why it should be shunned by Bible users.

In describing the foregoing characteristics of the two most ancient Codices, as revealed by a minute inspection thereof, and by careful comparison with the Received Text, we are not losing sight of the fact that the many divergences between the two do not of themselves tend to show the corruption of the former, since those differences may be explained equally well upon the theory adopted by the Revisionists, and supported by the more modern Greek editors, namely, that the two ancient Codices are the repositories of the purer Text, and that the corruptions and departures are with the Received Text and the sources from which it has been derived.

But let it be remembered in the first place that it is for the supporters of the two ancient Codices, as against the Received Text, to establish their case by a preponderance of testimony; for the burden of proof rests heavily upon them.

It is for them to show, and by testimony which carries thorough conviction, that God left His people for fifteen centuries or more to the bad effects of a corrupt text, until, in fact, the chance discovery by Constantine Tischendorf, in the middle of the 19th century, of some leaves of parchment so slightly valued by their custodians that they had been thrown into the waste paper basket, and until (for some mysterious and as yet unexplained reason) the Codex Vaticanus was exhumed from its suspicious sleeping place at the papal headquarters.* It is for them to explain, if they can, the concurrence of a thousand manuscripts, widely distributed geographically, and spread over a thousand years of time, and of the many Versions and writings of "fathers" going back to the second century of our era. That there were corrupt and defective copies in the early centuries—many of the alterations having been made with deliberate intent—is well known; and to account for the survival of a few of these (three at the most) is not a difficult matter. Indeed there is good reason to believe that they owe their prolonged existence to the fact that they were known to be, by reason of their many defects, unfit for use.

* It is easy to understand why this particular Ms. is cherished at the Vatican; for its corruptions are what make it valuable to the leaders of the papal system. We can conceive therefore the satisfaction of those leaders that their highly prized Ms. has been allowed to play the leading part in the revision of the *English* Bible, than which there is nothing on earth they have more reason to fear. On the other hand, may not this be one of the causes why God, in His overruling providence has frustrated the attempt to displace the A. V. by a new version, based upon such a sandy foundation?

But, on the other hand, the fact (as is admitted) of the existence everywhere of a Text represented now by over a thousand extant manuscripts, and agreeing with the Received Text, can be accounted for only upon the supposition that that is the true Text.

Furthermore, we have shown by what has been presented above that the two most ancient Codices exhibit *clear internal evidences* of their defective character; and we have shown also that, in case of the Sinaitic Ms., the thoroughly corrupt and defective work of the original scribe (or scribes) was well known to generation after generation of those through whose hands it passed.

Summary

Briefly then to sum up the matter thus far, we observe:

1. That the most important and deplorable of the departures of the New Greek Text from the Received Text have been made with the support of *less than one percent of all the available witnesses;* or in other words, the readings discarded by the Revisers have the support of over 99 percent of the surviving Greek Texts (besides Versions and "Fathers").

2. That the two Mss. which had the controlling influence in most of these departures are so

corrupt upon their face as to justify the conclusion that they owe their survival solely to their bad reputation.

With these facts before us, and in view also of the leading part the English speaking peoples were to play in shaping the destinies of mankind during the eventful centuries following the appearance of the Version of 1611, we are justified in believing that it was through a providential ordering that the preparation of that Version was not in anywise affected by higher critical theories in general, or specifically by the two ancient Codices we have been discussing. For when we consider what the A. V. was to be to the world, the incomparable influence it was to exert in shaping the course of events, and in accomplishing those eternal purposes of God for which Christ died and rose again and the Holy Spirit came down from heaven—when we consider that this Version was to be, more than all others combined, "the Sword of the Spirit," and that all this was fully known to God beforehand, we are fully warranted in the belief that it was not through chance, but by providential control of the circumstances, that the translators had access to just those Mss. which were available at that time, and to none others. This belief in no way conflicts with the fact that *man's* part in the preparation of the A. V. is marked, and plainly enough, by man's infirmities.

Chapter V

The Principle of "Ancient Evidence Only" Examined

WE COME now to the examination of the principle adopted by the various editors of the Greek Text of the Bible, a principle that was imposed upon the Revision Committee, though that imposition was accomplished in such a way (as hereinafter pointed out) that many of them apparently were not aware of it until after they disbanded.

We fully admit that the principle of following the most ancient manuscripts is, on its face, reasonable and safe; for it is indisputable that (other things being equal) the copies nearest to the original autographs are most likely to be freest from errors. If therefore it were a question whether or not we should follow, in the fashioning of a Greek Text, the earliest as against later manuscripts, there would be no "question" at all; for all would agree. But, as the case actually stands, it is impossible for us to follow the earliest manuscripts, for the simple reason that *they no longer exist.* Not a single copy of the many thousands that were made, circulated, and read in the first three cen-

turies is known to exist to-day. We do have Versions and patristic quotations that date back to the second century, and these, according to the principle we are discussing, are entitled to great weight. Is it not strange therefore, that those who justify their course by appealing to, and by professing to follow blindly, that principle, should cast it aside and accept the readings of *fourth* century Codices, where these are in conflict with *second* century Versions and quotations?

Seeing then that the earliest manuscripts are no longer in existence, we cannot follow them, and hence it is clear that the problem which confronts us is one that cannot be solved by application of the simple rule we are discussing. Briefly, the situation is this: We have on the one hand, the Greek Text of 1611 which served as the basis for the A. V.—a Text that represents and agrees with a thousand manuscripts going back as far as the fifth century, and with Versions and quotations going back to the second. As to this there is no dispute at all; for Drs. Westcott and Hort admit the existence of this Text, and even assume that it was discussed and approved by convocations of the Eastern churches as early as *the third century.* On the other hand, we have the Codices Vaticanus, Sinaiticus, and Beza, supposedly dating, as to the first two, from the fourth century, and as to the last from the sixth, which manuscripts pre-

sent thousands of divergences (omissions, additions, substitutions, transpositions, and modifications) from the Received Text. Upon such a state of things the question presented for decision is this: Shall we stand by the Received Text (accepting corrections thereof wherever they can be established by preponderating proof and putting those ancient Codices on the level of other witnesses, to be tested as to their credibility like all others)? Or shall we abandon the Textus Receptus in favor of that of Westcott and Hort, or of some other of the half dozen that profess to be shaped by the principle of following the ancient manuscripts? This is the question we propose to discuss in the present chapter.

It should be observed, before we proceed with this question, that the agreeing testimony (where they do agree) of the Vatican and Sinaitic Mss. cannot be properly regarded as having the force of two independent witnesses; for there are sufficient evidences, both internal and external, to warrant the conclusion that these two Codices are very closely related, that they are, in fact, copies of the same original, itself a very corrupt transcript of the New Testament. For while it is admitted on all hands that the Text used as the basis of the Authorized Version correctly represents a Text known to have been widely (if not everywhere) in use as early as the second century (for the

Peschito and Old Latin Versions, corroborated by patristic quotations afford ample proof of that), on the other hand it is not known that the two Codices we are discussing represent anything but copies of a bad original, made worse in the copying.

Divine Safeguards to the Text

It is appropriate at this point to direct attention to the Divinely ordained means which have thus far protected the Sacred Text from serious corruption. He who gave to men the Holy Scriptures to serve throughout the age as the sure foundation of that "faith of the Son of God" which alone avails for personal salvation, and to be also the sufficient rule of life and conduct for "the household of faith," has not failed to devise effectual means for the preservation of His written Word. The means in question are, according to God's usual way of continuing the line of a living thing, incidental to and inherent in the thing itself, and not something extraneous thereto. For it is a part of the normal life of every individual to provide for the continuance and multiplication of individuals of its own kind. Thus, as the grain supplies not only bread to the eater, but also seed to the sower, so in like manner God has provided that His living Word should both feed every generation of saints, and should also increase and multiply itself. As it is written, "And the Word

of God *increased"* (Ac. 6:7); and again, "But the Word of God *grew and multiplied"* (Ac. 12:24); and once more, "So mightily *grew* the Word of God and *prevailed"* (Ac. 19:20).

The means which mainly have served to accomplish the purpose referred to, are these:

1. The necessity that there should be a great and steadily increasing multiplication of copies; for this provides *automatically* the most effectual security imaginable against corruption of the Text.

2. The necessity that the Scriptures should be translated into divers languages. This translation of the Written Word into various tongues is but a carrying out of that which the miracle of Pentecost indicated as a distinctive characteristic of this age, namely, that everyone should hear the saving truth of God *in the tongue wherein he was born.* Thus, the agreement of two or more of the earliest *Versions* would go a long way towards the establishment of the true reading of any disputed passage.

It is appropriate at this point to direct attention to the very great value of a *Version* as a witness to the purity of the original Text from which it was translated. Those who undertake a work of such importance as the translation of the New Testament into a foreign language would, of course, make sure, as the very first step, that they had the best obtainable Greek Text. Therefore a Version (as the Syriac or

Old Latin) of the second century is a clear witness as to the Text recognized at that early day as the true Text.

This point has an important bearing upon the question we are now examining. For, remembering that "we have no actual 'Copies' *(i. e.,* original Greek Texts) so old as the Syriac and Latin 'Versions' *(i. e.,* translations) *by probably more than 200 years" (The Traditional Text,* Burgon and Miller), and that "The oldest *Versions* are far more ancient than the oldest (Greek) manuscripts" (Canon Cook), and remembering too that those venerable Versions prove the existence in their day of a standard Text agreeing essentially with our *Textus Receptus,* and it will be recognized that "the most ancient evidence" is all in favor of the latter.

3. The activity of the earliest assailants of the church necessitated, on the part of the defenders of the faith, and that from the very beginning, that they should *quote extensively from every part of the New Testament.* In this way also a vast amount of evidence of the highest credibility, as to the true reading of disputed passages, has been accumulated, and has come down to us in the writings of the so-called "Church Fathers."

But of what avail would all these checks and safeguards have been if men had been allowed to follow a principle so obviously unsound as that the most ancient manuscripts are to have

the deciding voice in every dispute? However, God can be trusted to see to it that all attempts to sweep away His protecting means should fail —as in this case.

The Value of Comparatively Late Mss.

It is quite true that most of the extant copies of the Greek New Testament date from the 10th to the 14th century. Thus they are separated from the inspired original Writings by a thousand years or more. Yet, that they faithfully represent those originals, and that the concurrence of a large majority of them would correctly decide every disputed reading, no reasonable person should ever doubt. The extant texts of secular writers of antiquity (as Herodotus, Thucydides, and Sophocles) are but few in comparison with the thousand manuscripts of the Scriptures, and are separated from *their* originals by *500 additional years.* Moreover, they lack the extraordinary safeguards, mentioned above, whereby the integrity of the Scriptures has been protected. Yet no one doubts that we have correct texts of those ancient writers. So the fact is that the security which the Text of the Scriptures has enjoyed is, as has been well said, "altogether unique and extraordinary."

Errors of Omission

In considering the principle of following the most ancient manuscripts it is important to note how it works in the case of that commonest of all errors—errors of omission; and in discussing this point we would take as an example the question of the last twelve verses of the Gospel of Mark (referred to specifically later on). Those verses are absolutely necessary to the completeness of the Gospel; yet because they are not in "the two most ancient Mss." the Revisionists have marked them as probably spurious.

Here then we may propose a question upon which the merits of the R. V. may be decided, at least to a very large extent: Should the purely *negative* testimony of those two Codices *(i. e.,* the fact that certain words and passages are not found in them) be allowed to overthrow the *affirmative* testimony of hundreds of other Greek Manuscripts, Versions, and quotations from the "church fathers?" This is a question which anyone of ordinary intelligence can be trusted to decide correctly when the following points (to which Dr. Hort and the majority of the Revision Committee must have been strangely blinded) are taken into account:

1. The commonest of all mistakes in copying manuscripts, or in repeating a matter, are mistakes of *omission,* or *lapses of memory,* or the

results of *inattention.* Hence it is an accepted principle of evidence that the testimony of one competent witness, who says he saw or heard a certain thing, carries more weight than that of a dozen who, though on the spot, can only say that they did not see or hear it, or that they do not remember it. Therefore, other things being equal, the *affirmative* evidence of the other three ancient Codices and Versions, and that of the "fathers" who quote those verses as unquestioned Scripture, is an hundred fold more worthy of credence than the *negative* testimony of the two which were allowed to control in settling the text of the R. V.

2. As we have already stated, a superstitious deference was paid to the Sinai and Vatican Mss. because of their (supposed) greater antiquity, the assumption being that the older the Ms. the more likely is it to be correct. But that assumption is wholly unwarrantable. In the concrete case before us, we have, in support of the Text of the A. V., the concurrent testimony of many manuscripts, from many *different parts* of the world; and though these were copies of older copies no longer in existence, yet, upon the soundest principles of the law of evidence, their concurrent testimony serves to establish conclusively the various disputed passages, where the two ancient Codices present variances.

The question of the authenticity of the last

twelve verses of the Gospel by Mark is of such importance that we propose to cite the testimony in regard thereto more fully in a subsequent chapter. We are referring to it here only as an impressive illustration of a general principle. That principle (the causes of errors of omission) is of exceptional importance in this case because, as we have seen, the original scribe of the Sinaitic Codex was peculiarly given to errors of that sort.

A Test of the Principle of "Ancient Evidence"

Let us take an illustration of what we are here seeking to establish, namely, that the concurrent testimony of the manuscripts which support the Received Text conclusively establish its authenticity in parts where it differs from the "New Greek Text" of Westcott and Hort. For this purpose let us suppose that a hundred copies of a certain original document in a central business office were made by different copyists and sent to as many different branch-offices in various parts of the world; and suppose that, since the document contained directions for the carrying on of the business for many generations, it had to be copied again and again as the individual Mss. were worn out through usage. Suppose further that, after centuries of time, one of the *earliest* copies should turn up which, upon examination, was found to lack a word or

sentence found in later copies in actual service, and that it were deemed important to settle the question of the authenticity of that word or sentence. Suppose further that, for the purpose in view, a dozen of the manuscripts then in actual use in various and far distant parts of the world, each one being a late copy of previously used and worn-out copies, were examined, and that the disputed word or sentence were found in each of those late copies, is it not clear that the authenticity thereof would be established beyond all reasonable dispute? Such must be the conclusion, because the absence thereof in the ancient copy could be easily accounted for, whereas its presence in a number of later copies, each of which came from a distinct source, could not be accounted for except on the assumption of its genuineness.

But let us suppose that, in addition to the various copies in use in various places, there existed certain *translations* (versions in foreign languages) which translations were earlier than the very earliest of the existing manuscripts in the original tongue; and also that many *quotations* of the disputed passage were found in the writings of persons who had lived in or near the days when the document itself was written; and suppose that the disputed word or sentence were found in every translation and every quotation, would not its genuineness be established beyond the faintest shadow of a doubt?

This supposititious case will give a good idea of the strength of the evidence in favor of the Text of the A. V. For in the settling of that Text due weight was given to the *concurrent* testimony of the numerous Mss. in actual use in different churches, *widely separated* from one another; and also to the corroborating testimony of the most ancient Versions and of the patristic writings; whereas, in the settling of the text of the R. V. the evidence of highest grade was uniformly rejected in favor of that of the lowest grade.

The Strength of the Case in Favor of the Received Text

3. But the case in favor of the Greek Text of the A. V. is far stronger than this. For when the two Mss. which controlled the Westcott and Hort text are scrutinized, they are found to contain such *internal proofs* of their unreliability as to impeach their own testimony, and render them utterly unworthy of belief. They present the case of witnesses who have been caught in so many misstatements as to discredit their entire testimony.

To begin with, their history renders them justly open to suspicion. For why should a special Ms. be carefully treasured in the Vatican, if not for the reason that it contained errors and textual corruptions favorable to the doctrines and practices of Rome? And why was

the other Ms., discovered in the last century by Tischendorf, allowed to lie in disuse for hundreds of years from the fourth century (as supposed) until the nineteenth? A reasonable inference would be that the Ms. was cast aside and ultimately consigned to the waste paper basket, because it was known to be permeated with errors of various sorts. And this inference is raised to the level of practical certainty by the fact that, time and again, the work of correcting the entire manuscript was undertaken by successive owners.

But not to dwell longer upon mere circumstances, the two Mss., when carefully examined, are found to bear upon their face clear evidences that they were derived from a common, and a very corrupt, source. The late Dr. Edward Vining of Cambridge, Mass., has gone thoroughly into this, and has produced evidence tending to show that they were copies (and most carelessly made) of an original brought by Origen out of Egypt, where, as is well known, the Scriptures were corrupted almost from the beginning in the interest of the same ascetic practices as now characterize the church of Rome.

Dr. Scrivener (generally regarded as the ablest of the textual critics) says that "the worst corruptions to which the New Testament has ever been subjected originated *within a hundred years after it was composed,*" and that

"Irenæus and the African fathers used far inferior manuscripts to those employed by Stunica, or Erasmus, or Stephens, thirteen centuries later, when moulding the *Textus Receptus.*"

In view of such facts as these, it is easy to see what havoc would result to the sacred text if (as actually happened in the production of the R. V.) its composition were controlled by two manuscripts of Egyptian origin, to the actual repudiation of the consensus of hundreds of later manuscripts of good repute, of the most ancient and trustworthy of the Versions, and of the independent witness of the earliest Christian writers.

4. Bearing in mind that, as Dr. Kenyon of the British Museum says, "the manuscripts of the New Testament are counted by hundreds and even thousands," it is a cause for astonishment that credence should have been given in any instance to the Vatican or Sinai Ms. (or both together in cases where they agree) against the agreeing testimony of the multitude of opposing witnesses. But such was the rule consistently followed in compiling the Text for the R. V. Canon Cook in his book on the "Revised Version of the First Three Gospels," says:

"By far the greatest number of innovations, including those which give the severest shocks to our minds, are adopted on the testimony of two manu-

scripts, or even of one manuscript, against the distinct testimony of all other manuscripts, uncial and cursive.* . . . The Vatican Codex, sometimes alone, but generally in accord with the Sinaitic, is responsible for *nine-tenths* of the most striking innovations in the R. V."

We have deemed it worth while to examine with some care the principle whereby modern editors of the Greek Text of the New Testament profess to have been guided, and this for the reasons, *first,* that the question here discussed, and the facts whereby it must be determined, lie beyond the reach of most of those for whose benefit we are writing; and *second,* that if we are right in our view that the principle we are discussing is utterly unsound, is contrary to the rules of evidence, and is certain to lead astray those who submit to its guidance, we have taken the foundation completely from under the Revised Version of 1881 and of every other Version that rests upon the same corrupt Greek Text, or one constructed upon the same principles.

We bring our remarks under this heading to a close by quoting the following from Scrivener's "Plain Introduction to the Text of the N. T." (1883):

* For some centuries after Christ all Greek manuscripts were written entirely in capital letters. Such mss. (the most ancient) are called "uncial." In later times the custom of using capitals at the beginning only of a sentence, or for proper names, came into existence. That style of writing is called "cursive."

"Dr. Hort's system is entirely destitute of historical foundation."

And again:

"We are compelled to repeat as emphatically as ever our strong conviction that the hypothesis to which he (Dr. Hort) has devoted so many laborious years is destitute not only of historical foundation but of all probability resulting from the internal goodness of the text which its adoption would force upon us."

He quotes Dr. Hort as saying, "We cannot doubt that S. Luke 23:34 comes from an extraneous source," and he replies, "Nor can we, on our part, doubt that the system which entails such consequences is *hopelessly self-condemned.*"

We conclude therefore, from what has been under consideration up to this point in our inquiry, that the R. V. should be rejected, not only because of the many unsupported departures from the A. V. it contains, but because the Greek Text whereon it is based was constructed upon a principle so unsound that the resulting Text could not be other than "hopelessly" corrupt.

Chapter VI

The Procedure of the Revision Committee

The Instructions Given Them and How They Were Carried Out—No Authority Given to Fashion a New Greek Text—How Their Sanction Was Seemingly Given to the Westcott and Hort Text

SOME of our readers will perhaps be asking how it was possible that the learned men who composed the Revision Committee could have allowed the great mass of testimony which sustains the authenticity of the Received Text to be set aside upon the sole authority of two Codices so dubious as the two we have been discussing. The explanation is that the Revisionists *did not consider these matters at all.* They were not supposed to undertake the refashioning of the Greek Text—for that lay entirely outside their instructions—and they had therefore no occasion to go into the many intricate matters involved in the weighing of the evidence for and against the Received Text.

Neither was it their province to decide upon the soundness of the principle of following an-

cient Mss. only; and the account of their proceedings (published by Dr. Newth, one of the Revisers) makes it quite plain that they did not have before them, or give any consideration to, the weighty matters of fact, affecting the character of those two "ancient witnesses," which we are now putting before our readers. It is therefore to be noted (and it is an important point) that, in regard to the underlying Greek Text of the R. V. and the principles that controlled its formation, no appeal can properly be made to the scholarship of the Committee, howsoever great it might be. In view of all the facts it seems clear that, not until after the Committee had disbanded, and their work had come under the scrutiny of able scholars and faithful men, were they themselves aware that they had seemingly given their official sanction to the substitution of the "New Greek Text" of Westcott and Hort for the *Textus Receptus*. The Westcott and Hort Text had not yet been published, and hence had never been subjected to scrutiny and criticism; nor had the principles upon which it was constructed been investigated. Only after it was too late were the facts realized, even by the Revisers themselves.

The mischief has thus been traced back to those two scholars, and to a Text that had not yet seen the light of day and been subjected to the scrutiny of other scholars. And we now know that not until after the R. V. of the New

Testament had been published was it known that the Westcott and Hort Text had been quietly imposed upon the Revisers, and that it was conformed to the two old Codices, Sinaiticus and Vaticanus.

Dean Burgon was one of the first to call attention to the fact that the most radical departures in the R. V. were not new *translations* of the Received Text, but were departures that arose from *changes in the Greek Text itself.* No announcement of this important fact had been made by the Committee; and indeed there was seemingly a disposition to throw a veil over this part of the proceedings in Committee. "But," says Dean Burgon, "I traced the mischief home to its true authors—Drs. Westcott and Hort—a copy of whose unpublished text, *the most vicious in existence,* had been *confidentially and under pledges of the strictest secrecy,* placed in the hands of every member of the revising body."

Dean Burgon thereupon proceeded to publish some of these facts in a series of articles which appeared in the Quarterly Review in 1883; and subsequent events have amply proved the correctness of his anticipations at that time, namely that the effect of careful investigations would eventually convince all competent judges that the principles on which the "New Greek Text" was constructed were "radically unsound;" and that "the Revision of 1881 must come to be universally regarded as—what it

most certainly is—the most astonishing, as well as the most calamitous, literary blunder of the age."

Dean Burgon had undertaken the examination of the R. V. upon the supposition that that work was what its name implies, and what its authors had been charged to produce, namely, a "Revision of the Authorized Version." But, as he puts it, "we speedily found that an entirely different problem awaited us. We made the distressing discovery that the underlying Greek Text had been completely refashioned throughout." This is the more serious because no one, upon reading the preface to the R. V. would find any hint at such a thing. But, thanks to the thorough investigations of scholars of the first rank (some of whom are quoted in this volume) it is now possible for all who are interested in this great and solemn question, to satisfy themselves that Drs. Westcott and Hort have indeed, as Dean Burgon said, "succeeded in producing a Text vastly more remote from the inspired autographs of the evangelists and apostles of our Lord, than any which has appeared since the invention of printing."

Referring in another place to this important feature of the case, Dean Burgon said:

"A revision of the English Authorized Version* having been sanctioned by the Convention of the

* Not, be it observed, a revision of the *Greek Text.*

Southern Province in 1871, the opportunity was eagerly grasped by two irresponsible scholars of the University of Cambridge (meaning Drs. Westcott and Hort) for obtaining the general sanction of the Revising body, and thus indirectly of the Convocation itself, for a private venture of their own—their privately devised Revision of the *Greek Text*. On that Greek Text of theirs (which I hold to be the most depraved that has ever appeared in print) with some slight modifications, our English Authorized Version has been *silently* revised: silently, I say, for in the margin of the English no record is preserved of the underlying Textual changes introduced by the Revisionists. On the contrary, use has been made of that margin to insinuate suspicion and distrust, in countless particulars as to the authenticity of parts of the Text which have been suffered to remain unaltered."

The Procedure of the Revision Committee

An account of the mode of procedure of the Revision Committee, whereby they settled the final reading of the English Text has been published by one of the members (Dr. Newth); and as detailed by him it is certainly not calculated to inspire us with confidence in the results thereby arrived at. This was the mode: A passage being under consideration, the Chairman asks, "Are any Textual changes proposed?" If a change be proposed then "the evidence for and against is briefly stated." This is done by "two members of the Company—Dr. Scrivener and Dr. Hort." And if those two members disagree "the vote of the Company is taken, and

the proposed Reading accepted or rejected. *The Text being thus settled,* the Chairman asks for proposals on the Rendering" *(i. e.,* the Translation).

Thus it appears that there was no attempt whatever on the part of the Revisionists to examine the evidence bearing upon the many disputed readings. They only listened to the views of two of their number (one of whom, as we have seen, was fatally obsessed by a vicious theory) and thereupon, in summary fashion, they "settled" the Text by a majority vote. Can we possibly have any confidence in a Text that was "settled" by such a slap-dash method?

Sir Edmund Beckett in his book, "Should the Revised Be Authorized?" (p. 42) aptly remarks upon the above that, if Dr. Newth's description "of the process whereby the Revisionists 'settled' the Greek alterations is not a kind of a joke, it is quite enough to 'settle' this Revised Greek Testament in a very different sense." And Canon Cook ("R. V. of the First Three Gospels Considered") says concerning the above explanation by Dr. Newth, "Such a proceeding appeared to me so strange that I fully expected the account would be corrected, or that some explanation would be given which might remove the very unpleasant impression." But not so. On the contrary, the Chairman himself (Bishop Ellicott) is authority for the fact that Dr. Newth's account of the method

whereby the Greek Text was "settled" is quite correct.

Sir Edmund Beckett has, we think, put the matter very well when he said that Dr. Newth's account of the way the Committee on Revision "settled" the Greek Text "is quite enough to 'settle' the Revised Version in a very different sense." For in the production of the "New Greek Text" the Revisers have departed from the Textus Receptus nearly 6,000 times. The question of every proposed change should have been made a matter of careful investigation, and should have been reached according to the weight of the evidence, for and against. But from the published account of the proceedings, vouched for by the chairman (Bishop Ellicott) as correct, we understand that in no case was there any examination of the question, or weighing of the evidence by the Committee.

Upon this state of things Bishop Wordsworth remarks:

> "The question arises whether the Church of England, which sanctioned a revision of her Authorized Version *under the express condition* (which she most wisely imposed) *that no changes should be made in it except such as were absolutely necessary,* could consistently accept a Version in which 36,000 changes have been made, not a fiftieth of which can be shown to be needed, or even desirable."

Chapter VII

Specific Examples of Textual Corruption

ENOUGH has been said, we think, to impeach successfully the credibility of the two "ancient witnesses" whose testimony was so largely relied upon in constructing a Greek Text for the R. V. We will therefore proceed now to refer to some conspicuous instances wherein passages or clauses have been either corrupted or brought under unjust suspicion through their evidence, which is largely of a negative character. And this will throw further light upon the character of those witnesses; for an effectual way of discrediting their testimony is to produce actual instances of the mischief that has been done by accepting it.

The Last Twelve Verses of Mark

In his "unanswered and unanswerable" work on this famous passage (published some years before the R. V. appeared, so that the Revisers were duly informed in regard thereto) Dean Burgon wrote as follows:

"The consentient witness of the manuscripts is even extraordinary. With the exception of the two

uncial manuscripts which have just been named (Vatican and Sinaitic) there is not one Codex in existence, uncial or cursive (and we are acquainted with at least eighteen other uncials and about six hundred cursives of this Gospel), which leaves out the last twelve verses of S. Mark. The omission of these twelve verses, I repeat, in itself destroys our confidence in Codex B (Vaticanus) and Codex Sinaiticus. . . . Nothing whatever which has hitherto come before us lends the slightest countenance to the modern dream that S. Mark's Gospel, as it left the hands of its inspired author, ended abruptly at verse 8. . . . The notion is an invention, a pure imagination of the critics, ever since the days of Griesbach."

The fact that the Revisers have discredited a passage so important as the ending of Mark's Gospel is enough in itself to arouse suspicion as to their entire work, and to create a feeling of uncertainty as to their fitness for the great task entrusted to them. For the evidence in favor of the authenticity of that passage is simply overwhelming.

The Angelic Message (Luke 2:14)

As another typical instance of the sort of changes that the Revisionists have attempted to introduce through the unsound methods they pursued, we take the words of the angelic message, "And on earth peace, good will towards men" (Lu. 2:14). For this the Revisionists, upon the authority of the little handful of cor-

rupt Mss. to which they superstitiously bowed, have substituted the uncouth and preposterous phrase, "peace among men in whom he is well pleased."

Now we should suppose that every one acquainted with the language of Scripture, and possessed of spiritual discernment to even a moderate extent, would unhesitatingly say that such a phrase could never have been part of the true Word of God. But, going back to the evidence, it is found that, with the exception of four Codices of bad repute (two of which have been corrected as to this very passage *in loco) every existing copy of the Gospels* (amounting to many hundreds) has the reading of the Received Text; and this reading has the support of five ancient Versions, and of quotations from more than a score of "fathers." It is a case where, *upon the evidence,* there is no room for the smallest doubt. And this is a fair example of how the case stands with nearly all the changes of the Greek Text.

The Lord's Agony in the Garden and His Prayer for His Murderers

As further examples of the havoc which the system adopted by the Revisers has wrought, we would refer to Luke 22:43, 44, and Luke 23:34. These passages, with many others (some of them very important) the Revisers have enclosed in brackets in order to indicate

the "moral certainty" they entertained that the words in question are spurious. The first of the above mentioned passages describes the Lord's agony and bloody sweat in the garden, and the other is the vitally important prayer of Christ on the cross, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do." We have a special comment on this last passage below.

Now the state of the evidence, as in the last preceding instance, is such as to establish beyond all doubt that both these passages are genuine Scripture.

To Save That Which Was Lost

As another example out of many we take the precious words of the Lord Jesus, "The Son of man is come to save that which was lost," which are expunged by the Revisionists from Matthew 18:11, although they are attested by every known uncial except three (the usual three of bad character), by every known cursive except three, by numerous Versions, by the lectionaries of many churches, and by a large number of "fathers." In a word, the evidence overwhelmingly establishes the genuineness of the passage.

Peter Walking on the Sea

In Matthew 14:30 the A. V. says that when Peter "saw the wind boisterous he was afraid." The R. V. strikes out the word "boisterous," which, however, is a word of capital importance

here. The only warrant for this meddlesome change, which spoils the sense of the passage, is that Tischendorf (alone of all the editors) rejects the word. And the Revisers have made matters worse by putting in the margin the utterly misleading statement "many ancient authorities add *strong.*" The reader would certainly understand from this that the majority of the authorities, especially the "ancient" ones, omitted the word. But the truth of the matter is that the Mss. which omit the word are *but two;* and of them Sir E. Beckett says, "and those two manuscripts appear also to be rather distinguished for blunders than for excellence." Here we have a most unjustifiable alteration, coupled with an utterly misleading statement of the facts behind it.

The Mystery of Godliness

Another example of vicious and wholly unwarranted tampering with an important passage, is furnished by the alteration in 1 Timothy 3:16, whereby the words, "God was manifest in the flesh," are changed to "he who was manifested in the flesh." How this change strikes at the foundation truth of the Deity of our Lord is apparent at a glance. As to the evidence in this case, Dean Burgon says that the reading adopted by the Revisers "is not to be found in more than two copies of S. Paul's Epistles, is not certainly supported by a single Version, and

is not clearly advocated by a single Father." In a word the evidence is overwhelmingly against it. Dean Burgon, in his truly crushing reply to Bishop Ellicott, the chairman of the Revision Committee, has triumphantly vindicated the authenticity of the Received Text in its reading of this vitally important passage.

From that reply we extract the following:

"Behold then the provision which the Author of Scripture has made for the effectual conservation in its integrity of this portion of His Written Word! Upwards of 1800 years have run their course since the Holy Ghost, by His servant Paul, rehearsed 'the Mystery of Godliness,' declaring this to be the great foundation fact, namely, that 'God was manifest in the flesh.' And lo! out of 254 copies of St. Paul's Epistles, no less than 252 are discovered to have preserved that expression. The copies whereof we speak were procured in every part of Christendom, being derived in every instance from copies older than themselves; which again were transcripts of copies older still. They have since found their way, without design or contrivance, into the libraries of every country in Europe, where they have been jealously guarded."

Such an agreement between hundreds of witnesses, remote from one another, establishes the true reading beyond the faintest shadow of a doubt, particularly in view of the fact that the mistake of substituting "who" for "God" is easily accounted for by the resemblance in

original uncial Mss. between the conventional symbol for "God" and the relative pronoun "who." We submit, as a proper and just conclusion from these facts, that men who, upon such a state of the evidence before them, would cast out of the Scripture at this vital point, the word "God," and replace it by "he who," have thereby demonstrated their unfitness for the work of revising the Greek Text of the N. T.

The Omission of Mark 6:11

The Revisionists have discarded as spurious the words of Christ: "Verily I say unto you it shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city" (Mk. 6:11).

Referring to this mutilation, Dean Burgon, in a letter addressed to the chairman of the Revision Committee, commented as follows:

"How serious the consequences have been they only know who have been at pains to examine your work with close attention. Not only have you on countless occasions thrust out words, clauses, and entire sentences of genuine Scripture, but you have been careful that no trace should survive of the fatal injury you have inflicted. I wonder you were not afraid. Can I be wrong in deeming such a proceeding to be in a high degree sinful? Has not the Spirit pronounced a tremendous doom (Rev. 22:19) against those who do such things? Were you not afraid for instance to leave out (from Mk. 6:11) those solemn words of our Saviour, 'Verily I say unto you, It

shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city'? Have you studied S. Mark's Gospel to so little purpose as not to know that the six uncials on which you rely are the depositories of an abominably corrupt recension of the second Gospel?''

''Bless Them That Curse You'' (Matt. 5:44)

In the same letter, referring to the omission of Matthew 5:44, Dean Burgon said:

''But you have committed a yet more deplorable blunder when—without leaving behind you either note or comment of any sort—you obliterated from S. Matthew 5:44 the solemn words which I proceed to underline:—'*Bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you,* and pray for them which *despitefully use you* and persecute you.' You relied almost exclusively on those two false witnesses, of which you are so superstitiously fond. (Vatican and Sinai Mss.) regardless of the testimony of almost all the other copies besides, of almost all the versions, and of a host of primitive fathers, half of whom lived and died before our two oldest manuscripts came into being.''

''Father Forgive Them''

We have already quoted Dr. Hort's remark concerning the infinitely precious words, ''Father forgive them for they know not what they do,'' words so divinely gracious that they are self-authenticating, but of which Dr. Hort said he could not doubt that they ''came from an extraneous source.'' Here is Dean Burgon's comment:

"These twelve precious words Drs. Westcott and Hort enclose within double brackets in token of the 'moral certainty' they entertain that the words are spurious; and yet these words are found in every known uncial and in every known cursive copy, except four; besides being found in every ancient version; and *what amount* (we ask the question with sincere simplicity), what amount of evidence is calculated to inspire undoubted confidence in any existing reading, if not such a concurrence of authorities as this?" As to the patristic evidence to this passage—"we find our Saviour's prayer attested by upwards of forty ancient fathers (of the second to the eighth centuries) . . . How could our revisionists *dare* to insinuate doubts into wavering hearts and unlearned heads where (as here) they were *bound* to know there exists no manner of doubt at all?"

"And Am Known of Mine"

John 10:14 reads thus in the A. V., *"I am the Good Shepherd, and know My Sheep, and am known of Mine."*

For the last clause the R. V. substitutes "and Mine own know Me." In view of the next succeeding words, "As the Father knoweth me even so know I the Father," this change destroys the exquisite diversity of expression of the original, which implies that whereas the knowledge which subsists between the Father and the Son is mutually identical, the knowledge the creature has of the Creator is of a very different sort; and it puts the creature's knowledge of the Creator on the same level as the Father's knowledge of the Son, and the Son's

knowledge of the Father. Speaking of this regrettable change Dean Burgon says:

"The refinement in question has been faithfully retained all down the ages by every copy in existence, except the Vatican and the Sinaitic, and two others of equally bad character. Does anyone in his sober senses suppose that, if S. John had written 'Mine own know Me,' 996 manuscripts out of a thousand at the end of 1800 years would be found to exhibit 'I am known of Mine'?"

Dr. Malan sums up in the following words his examination of the first chapter of Matthew as it appears in the R. V.—"The Revisers have made 60 changes in that chapter. Of these one is good, and one is admissible. All the rest (58) appear ill-judged or unnecessary."

Canon Cook's verdict on the Revisers' Text of the first three Gospels is as follows:

"It is not too much to say that in nine passages out of ten—nay, to go further—in *every passage of vital importance as regards the integrity of Holy Scripture,* the veracity of the sacred writers, and the records of our Lord's Sayings, nearly all ancient versions, and with very few exceptions, all ancient fathers, support the readings rejected by the Revisers."

Sir Edmund Beckett (in his work already quoted) has this to say about the "critical maxims" the Revisers are supposed to have followed in reaching their results:

"It would take a great many critical maxims to convince me that the apostles wrote what can only be fairly translated into nonsense; which they sometimes did, if the Revisers' new readings are all right; and moreover their adoption of them makes one suspicious about many other readings which cannot be brought under that test."

Many other examples might be given of changes in the Greek Text made in deference to the two ancient Codices (Vaticanus and Sinaiticus) and against the overwhelmingly preponderating testimony of Greek Mss. Versions and Fathers, changes which inflict manifest injury upon the Holy Scriptures; but the foregoing are amply sufficient to warrant the conclusion that the "New Greek Text" underlying the R. V. (which is virtually that of Westcott and Hort) is vastly inferior to that of the A. V., and specifically that the witnesses whose testimony controlled in the construction of the former are utterly untrustworthy.

Chapter VIII

Changes in Translation

HAVING considered those departures of the R. V. from the A. V. that are due to the use of a different Greek Text, we come now to changes of another sort, namely, changes of words and sentences where there was no change in the corresponding part of the Greek Text. In speaking of this class of changes we do not fail to recognize, what is admitted by all competent authorities, that the A. V. could be corrected in a number of passages where the meaning is now obscured because of changes which three centuries have brought about in the meaning of English words, or where diligent study or recent discoveries have brought to light better readings. Such instances, however, are comparatively few, whereas the R. V. gives us about 36,000 departures, small and great, from the A. V. What shall we say of such a host of changes? Sir Edmund Beckett writes about it as follows:

"The two principal complaints of the work of the Revisers made by nearly every review, and by some of their own members (who protested in vain) are of the enormous number of alterations which convict themselves of being unnecessary; and the still

more serious one that they have hardly changed a sentence *without spoiling its English,* sometimes by the smallest touch or transposition of a word, and still more by the larger alterations.

"The condemnation of a great deal of the Revisers' work, in real fidelity of translation, as well as in style, by such a scholar as the Bishop of Lincoln has been from his youth, is a blow from which they will not easily recover. . . . Another dignitary and scholar of eminence has publicly declared that he dissented from one-third (which is 12,000) of the alterations the more ambitious majority persisted in; and it is generally understood that another Dean resigned for the same reason in despair."

In a great many instances changes were made in the tenses of verbs, upon the theory advocated by Drs. Westcott and Hort, that the proper rendering of the Greek aorist demanded such changes. But this has since that time been seriously called into question. Indeed a writer in the London *Times* for January 17, 1920, remarks that "Some years ago Bishop Westcott's son told the readers of *The Times* that the view taken by the Revisers of the proper meaning of the Greek aorist, which *led to so many alterations,* was now known to be mistaken."

One need not be a Greek scholar in order to form an opinion of his own regarding the many changes of words and phrases which the Revisers have made in cases where there was no thought of changing the meaning. Such changes appear upon a mere comparison of the two Ver-

sions; and if one has become at all used to the unapproachable style of the A. V. his ear must needs suffer continual offence and annoyance as he listens to the rendering of familiar passages in the R. V.

Speaking to this point Dean Burgon (in his *Revision Revised)* says:

"The English, as well as the Greek, of the newly Revised Version, is hopelessly at fault. It is to me simply unintelligible how a company of scholars can have spent ten years in elaborating such a very unsatisfactory production. Their uncouth phraseology and their jerky sentences, their pedantic obscurity and unidiomatic English, contrast painfully with the happy turns of expression, the music of the cadences, the felicities of the rhythm of our Authorized Version. . . . It is, however, the systematic depravation of the underlying Greek which does so grievously offend me. For this is nothing else but a poisoning of the River of Life at its Sacred Source. Our Revisers stand convicted of having deliberately rejected the words of Inspiration in every page, and of having substituted for them fabricated readings which the church has long since refused to acknowledge, or else has rejected, with abhorrence, readings which survive at this time only in a little handful of documents of the most depraved type."

Dr. Alexander Carson *(Inspiration of the Scriptures,* p. 198) has well said:

"There is no greater mistake than to suppose that a translation is good according as it is *literal.* It

may be asserted that, without exception, a literal translation of any book cannot be a faithful one. For if the word is not used in its literal sense in the original it is a mistranslation of it to translate it literally. *This is a canon of Biblical Interpretation of universal application, and of the greatest moment* —a canon not only often violated, but to violate which is, in the estimation of some translators, the highest praise. A translation of this kind, instead of conveying the original with additional light, is simply unintelligible."

Such being the case (and we think the truth of Dr. Carson's statement is self-evident) it will be clearly seen that the making of a real translation is not merely a matter of giving the literal meaning of the words of the original; and further that, in order to be a good translator, one needs other qualifications besides a knowledge of the original tongue. So, as between the two rival Versions, much depends upon the question whether the translators of 1881 were as well qualified for their work as those of 1611. As a help in the decision of this question we give, in this chapter, a few comparisons where changes have been made. We believe, however, that merely upon viewing broadly the two Versions most readers will recognize the great superiority of the Old Version. That work has commended itself to the acknowledged masters of the English tongue, as well as to the millions of ordinary readers, for more than three centuries, and it has occu-

pied in the world a place unapproached by any other book in any language. And although we know it is only a translation, and although we know also that (as Joseph Parker said) "a translation may have its faults, and copyists may make blunders, yet we still call it the Holy Bible," and it is to us, as it has been to ten generations past, in truth and reality, the Living Word of the Living God. Such being the state of the case our wisdom is to hold on to the Old Version, and to every part of it, except in specific cases (and they are but few) where it can be shown by clear proof that a change is needed.

Examples of Changes in Translation

In taking notice of a few of the thousands of new readings introduced by the Revisers, it should be remembered that, according to the instructions under which they acted, they were not to make "any new translation of the Bible, *nor any alteration of the language,* except where, in the judgment of the most competent scholars, such change is *necessary;*" and further they were instructed that "in such *necessary* changes, the style of the language employed in the existing Version be closely followed." Can any "competent" scholar tell us that even a sizable fraction of the host of changes now embodied in the R. V. were "necessary"? And will anyone pretend that, in the changes which have been introduced, the style

of the existing Version has been "closely followed"?

We have already pointed out that, in the first chapter of Matthew alone, the Revisers have made *sixty changes*, of which, according to a competent authority (Dr. Malan) fifty-eight were "either ill judged or unnecessary."

Going on to Matthew 4:12, we find that the words "John was *cast into prison*" are changed to "was delivered up." It may be claimed that the latter is a more literal rendering; but it is not an improved translation; for the best translation is that which best gives the sense of the original, and "delivered up" has no definite meaning for the English reader.

In Luke 8:45, 46 the R. V. has introduced no less than nineteen changes into 34 words; and in 2 Peter 1:5-7 thirty changes have been made in a passage containing only 38 words. These are extreme examples of the extraordinary propensity of the Revisers for making uncalled for changes. Concerning the former of these two passages Dean Burgon writes:

"I challenge any competent scholar in Great Britain to say whether every one of these changes be not absolutely useless, or else decidedly a change for the worse; six of them being downright errors."

His comment on the other passage is:

"To ourselves it appears that every one of these changes is a change for the worse, and that one of

the most exquisite passages in the N. T. has been hopelessly spoiled—rendered in fact well-nigh unintelligible—by the pedantic officiousness of the Revisers."

Paul Before King Agrippa

In Acts 26:24 the words of Festus to Paul, "much learning hath made thee mad," are changed in the R. V. to "thy much learning doth turn thee to madness." Concerning this novel and uncouth expression Sir E. Beckett says:

"We have heard of men being naturally inclined to madness, or being driven to madness by despair, and of being turned mad; and of wisdom being turned to madness; but never before have we heard of a man being turned to madness. It is idle to say the Greek required it; for the literal sense would be nonsense; and they have not given even the literal sense. What they have given us is a translation neither literal, nor sensible, nor idiomatic, nor harmonious, nor anything but an absurd and cacophonous piece of pedantry for nothing."

Concerning 2 Timothy 3:16

Of all the changes introduced into the Text of the R. V., that which has raised the greatest storm of protest is the alteration of the words, "*All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable,*" so as to make the passage read, "*Every Scripture given by inspiration of God is profitable.*" This apparently slight change gives a very different turn to the sense of the verse; for it suggests that there are

"Scriptures" which are not given by inspiration of God. Inasmuch as it has been often pointed out by competent scholars that there is no warrant whatever for this alteration, we do not dwell upon it.

The Testimony of the Version of 1911

As to the merits (or demerits) of the myriads of changes of translation brought in by the Revisers of 1881, we would call attention (as well worthy of consideration) to the judgment of the Committee of 34 Hebrew and Greek scholars who prepared the Tercentenary Edition of the Bible. The duty committed to them was to make—

"A careful scrutiny of the Text, with the view of correcting, in the light of the best modern research, such passages as are recognized by all scholars as in any measure misleading or needlessly obscure." And this as we understand it, is substantially what the Revisers of 1881 were instructed and expected to do.

The result of this scrutiny of the entire Text of the English Bible by the Committee of 1911 was that they repudiated *over 98 percent* of the changes introduced by the Revisers of 1881. That is to say, they accepted less than two out of every hundred of the changes brought in by the Revisers.

From the Preface to the 1911 Tercentenary Edition of the Bible (issued by the Oxford Press) we quote the following:

"The continued confidence of the Church Universal throughout English-speaking lands in the Authorized Version is seasoned and mature. Despite a limited number of passages in which the Revisers of 1611 seem to have missed the true meaning, and of a number of other passages which have, through changed usage, become obscure, the A. V. is still *the English Bible.*"

So it is, and so it is likely to be to the end.

This Tercentenary Commemoration Edition of 1911 may properly be regarded as the carefully deliberated verdict of a representative company of scholars, chosen with special reference to their knowledge of Biblical Hebrew and Greek and of all matters pertaining to the Text of the Holy Scriptures, a verdict reached after a comparative trial of the two Versions (A. V. and R. V.) side by side, for a period of thirty years. Their verdict was, in our opinion, fully warranted by the facts; and the passage of years since it was rendered has but served further to establish it.

Chapter IX

The Use Made of the Margin in the R. V.

IN THE preparation of the Authorized Version the useful expedient was adopted of putting in the margin of the page an alternative reading, in the few and comparatively unimportant passages which seemed to admit thereof. Also in the margin was given the translation of proper names appearing in the Text, and occasional items of information calculated to be a help to a better understanding of the Scripture.

Such was the precedent the Revisers had before them for their guidance. Furthermore, a rule adopted by the Committee required that *wherever a change was made in the Greek Text that change should be noted in the margin.* Nevertheless, in the preparation of the New Version the Committee departed wholly from the A. V. and also completely ignored the rule referred to.

Dean Burgon is authority for the statement that "use has been made of the margin to insinuate suspicion and distrust in countless particulars as to the authenticity of the text which has

been suffered to remain unaltered" (Preface to "Revision Revised").

Again, in the same volume ("Revision Revised") he says:

"The Revisionists have not corrected the 'Known Textual Errors.' On the other hand, besides silently adopting most of those wretched fabrications which are just now in favor with the German school, they have encumbered their margin with those other readings which, after due examination, *they had themselves deliberately rejected.* . . . What else must be the result of all this, but general uncertainty, confusion, and distress! A hazy mistrust of all Scripture has been insinuated into the hearts and minds of multitudes who, for this cause, have been forced to become doubters; yes, doubters in the truth of Revelation itself.

"How was it to have been believed that the Revisionists would show themselves industrious in sowing broadcast over four continents doubts as to the truth of Scripture, doubts which it will never be in their power to remove or recall?

"And here we must renew our protest against the wrong which has been done to English readers by the Revisionists' disregard of the IVth rule laid down for their guidance, *viz.*, that whenever they adopted a new textual reading such reading was to be '*indicated in the margin.*'"

And he addresses the Revisionists this question regarding their failure in duty to the English reader:

"How comes it to pass that you have *never* furnished him the information you stood pledged to fur-

nish, but have, instead, volunteered on every page information, worthless in itself, which can only serve to unsettle the faith of unlettered millions, and to suggest unreasonable as well as miserable doubts to the minds of all?"

Examples of Vagaries in Marginal Notes

The Name "Jesus"

Matthew 1:18 in the A. V. reads: "Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise." The R. V. marginal note says, "Some ancient authorities read 'of the Christ' "—that is to say, they omit the Name *Jesus.* But Dean Burgon says:

"Now what are the facts? Not one single known manuscript omits the word *Jesus;* while its presence is vouched for by the fathers Tatian, Irenæus, Origen, Eusebius, Epiphanius, Chrysostom, Cyril, in addition to *every known Greek copy of the Gospels,* and not a few of the versions."

"Thine is the Kingdom"

In Matthew 6:13 the Revisers have rejected the important clause: "For Thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever. Amen"; and in the margin they have put this: "Many authorities, some ancient but with variations, add, 'For Thine is' "—etc. Concerning this radical alteration of the Text, and concerning the marginal note thereon, Dean Burgon has this to say:

"All the manuscripts in the world"—over 500, remember—"*but nine* contain these words. Is it in any way credible that, in a matter like this, they should all have become corrupted? No hypothesis is needed to account for this, another instance of omission in copies which exhibit a mutilated text on every page."

"The Son of God"

In the Gospel of Mark the first marginal note relates to the supremely important words of verse 1, "the Son of God." The note says: "Some ancient authorities omit 'the Son of God.'" But the fact is (according to Dean B.) that "the words are found in every known copy *but three,* in *all* the Versions, and in many fathers. The evidence in favor of the clause is therefore overwhelming." What can have been the object of the Revisers in raising suspicion regarding a verse of supreme importance, as to the authenticity of which the proofs leave *no room for any doubt whatever?*

"Where Their Worm Dieth Not"

Concerning Mark 9: 44-48 and other passages, Dean Burgon, in his "Revision Revised," says:

"Not only has a fringe of most unreasonable textual mistrust been tacked on to the margin of every inspired page (as from Luke 10:41-11:11); not only has many a grand doctrinal statement been evacuated of its authority (as by the shameful mis-statement found in the margin against John 3:13, affecting the important words *which is in heaven,* and the vile

Socinian gloss which disfigures the margin of Romans 9:5—(*Christ,* Who is over all, God blessed forever); but we entirely miss many a solemn utterance of the Spirit, as when we are assured that verses 44 and 46 of Mark 9 are omitted by *'the best ancient authorities,'* whereas, on the contrary, the manuscripts referred to are *the worst."*

"Which is in Heaven"

And concerning the note on John 3:13, referred to in the foregoing quotation—"Many ancient authorities omit *'which is in heaven,'* " Dean Burgon asks with indignation:

"Why are we not rather assured that the precious clause in question *is* found in *every* manuscript in the world, except five of bad character?—is recognized by *all* the Latin and *all* the Syrian Versions; is either quoted or insisted on by a host of Fathers; in short is quite above suspicion? Why are we not told *that?* Those ten Versions, those 38 Fathers, that host of copies in proportion of 995 to 5—why, concerning all these, is there not so much as a hint let fall that such a mass of counter evidence exists?"

Surely such a suppression of the facts and misrepresentation of the truth in regard to a supremely important passage touching the Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, is deserving of the strongest reprobation.

"The Number of a Man"

In Rev. 13:18, opposite the words "and his number is six hundred and sixty and six," the

Revisers have put a note which says, "Some ancient authorities read *six hundred and sixteen.*" As to this Dean Burgon asks:

"Why are we not informed that *only one* corrupt uncial, *only one* cursive, *only one* Father, and *not one* ancient Version, advocates this reading? which on the contrary, Irenæus (170 A. D.) knew *but rejected,* remarking that '666', which is 'found in all the best and oldest copies, and is attested by men who saw John face to face,' is unquestionably the true reading."

The Island of Melita

Finally, from Dean Burgon's list of useless marginal glosses introduced by the Revisers, we take the following as fairly typical:

Acts 28:1. "For what conceivable reason is the world now informed that, instead of Melita, 'some ancient authorities read Militene'? Is every pitiful blunder of the Codex Vaticanus to live on in the margin of every Englishman's copy of the New Testament forever?" And after showing that all other Mss. and all Latin Versions and all "Fathers" who quote the passage, also the coins, and the ancient geographers, all read *Melita,* he says that this reading "has also been acquiesced in by every critical editor of the N. T. (excepting always Drs. Westcott and Hort) from the invention of printing until now. But, because those two misguided men, without apology, explanation, note or comment of any kind, have adopted *Militene* into *their* Text, is the Church of England to be dragged through the mire also, and made ridiculous in the eyes of Christendom?"

Chapter X

The Theory of Westcott and Hort Upon Which "The New Greek Text" Was Constructed

Bishop Ellicott's Defence of the R. V.—The Conclusion of the Matter

WE FEEL that this little volume, so uncompromisingly condemnatory as it is of the Version of 1881, and particularly of the Greek Text whereon that Version is based, should not go forth without at least a brief description of the theory upon which Drs. Westcott and Hort constructed their "New Text." That theory is set forth by themselves in their long and elaborate "Introduction to the New Testament," which was published simultaneously with the R. V. in 1881; and we need hardly say that, to themselves at least, and doubtless to others besides, there appeared to be good and sufficient reasons for the conclusions reached by them. But to us it seems that their conclusions are based wholly upon inferences and conjectures, and not only so, but they are directly contrary to all the known and pertinent facts.

Our suspicions are aroused to begin with, by the circumstance that Drs. Westcott and Hort have arrived at their conclusions by the exercise of that mysterious faculty of "critical intuition," wherewith the "higher critics" of modern times claim to be endowed, but of the nature and workings of which they can give no explanation whatever. We refer to the faculty whereby certain scholars of the German School of higher criticism claim ability to discern that various books of the Bible—as Genesis, Isaiah, and even the Gospels—are of *composite character,* the work of various authors and editors, who (they tell us) welded together several independent documents (whereof all trace has disappeared, and for the existence of which, or of any one of them, there is not a scintilla of proof). The same marvelous and mysterious faculty of "critical intuition" enables the possessors thereof (so they assure us) to resolve these (supposedly) composite documents into their original constituent elements, and even to assign to each of these "originals" the approximate date when it was first composed.

In like manner Drs. Westcott and Hort set forth, at prodigious length, what they are pleased to denominate their theory of "Conflation." Indeed that blessed word—probably new to nearly all of our readers—is made to carry most of the dead weight of their theory, which theory certainly has the attribute of nov-

elty, whatever else it may lack. But we hasten to explain that while Drs. Westcott and Hort admit that our *Textus Receptus,* in practically the form in which we now have it, existed *in and previous to the fourth century,* and that it was "dominant" in Syria and elsewhere, they tell us that it is (and was) a "conflation," that is to say a *composite Text,* formed by the *blowing together* (which is what the word "conflate" means) of two previously existing Texts. Do they offer any proof of this? None whatever. They simply discerned it by means of the mysterious faculty of critical intuition. But how do we know that they possess this ability, and have used it correctly in this case? We have their own word for it—nothing more.

But inasmuch as the method whereby the modern school of "higher criticism," which originated in the last century in Germany, reaches its "results" is doubtless quite new to most of our readers, we owe it to them to make our explanation of the Westcott and Hort theory, which bears a close family resemblance to that now famous method, as plain and simple as possible; "and this will we do, if God permit."

Thus far we have only the word of two scholars for it, (1) that they have discerned that the Received Text was formed by the "conflation," or fusing together, sometime previous to the 4th century, of two primitive Texts of

Scripture; and (2) that they (the aforesaid scholars) have been able (how, they do not explain, and presumably we should be unable to understand the process if they did) to resolve this composite Text into its original constituent elements. But this is only the *first step* in the procedure, which brings us at last to the conclusion that the Text of Westcott and Hort of 1870-1881 is the true Text of the original Scripture, and therefore should be adopted in the place of the Received Text.

The only thing they set forth as a warrant for this first step of the process is that, after a careful scrutiny of the entire Received Text, they find seven passages—some of them short phrases or single words—which *look to them* as if they *might have been* formed by the welding together of several originally diverse readings. Other scholars find nothing in these passages to indicate "conflation"; but, if there were the clearest evidences thereof in those seven scattered passages, what proof would that afford that the entire Text was a conflation of two distinct pre-existing Texts? None whatever. Therefore, the Westcott and Hort "theory" (if it were proper to designate it by that term) breaks down completely at the initial stage.

But we proceed to trace the process—which is interesting at least as an intellectual curiosity—through its successive stages.

Having assumed the existence of two distinct primitive Texts, earlier than what they are pleased to call the "dominant Antiochian Text" (which corresponds to our Received Text), they give them the names "Western" and "Neutral," respectively. Now, inasmuch as these "primitive Texts" are wholly the creatures of their scholarly imagination, they have the indisputable right to bestow upon them whatever names they please. But we must ever keep in mind that there is *not a shadow of proof* that these "primitive Texts," or either of them, ever existed. What is, however, overwhelmingly established, and is admitted by Drs. Westcott and Hort, is that *a Text, practically identical with our Received Text, existed, and was "dominant" in Antioch and elsewhere, in and before the 4th century.*

The next in the string of pure conjectures and bold assumptions whereby Dr. Hort (for the theory appears to be his personal contribution to the joint enterprise) arrives at his conclusion, is that, of the two supposed primitive Texts, the "Neutral" was the purer Text, and the "Western" the corrupted Text. The speculation is now getting far out of reach. For how can we have even a conjectural opinion as to which of two supposed Texts was the purer, when neither of them is known to have existed at all? Surely Dean Burgon is amply justified in saying that the entire speculation is "an ex-

cursion into cloud-land; a dream, and nothing more."

But we have not yet reached the end of the matter. For what avails it to know that the supposed "Neutral Text" existed in the 4th century, and that it was a correct representation of the original inspired Writings, if that "Neutral Text" no longer exists? But Dr. Hort is equal to the difficulty; for he completes the long chain of guesswork by declaring that Codex B (Vaticanus) is a representative of the supposed "Neutral" Text. Is there anything in the nature of proof offered in support of this radical assertion? Nothing whatever. And how could there be? For until we have proof that the (wholly imaginary) "Neutral Text" had an actual existence, and that it existed before the Received (or so-called "Syrian") Text came into being, how can we even consider the question whether or not the Vatican Codex is a survivor of that "Neutral Text"? Dean Burgon is not amiss when he characterizes the whole theory as "mere moonshine." Indeed, it seems to us to be either a case of solemn trifling with a matter of supreme importance, or a deliberate attempt to lead astray the English-speaking nations, and through them the whole world, and that without the support of a scintilla of real proof, but rather in the face of all the pertinent facts. As Dean Burgon, in his exhaustive analysis of Dr. Hort's theory, says:

"Bold assertions abound (as usual with this repected writer) but *proof*, he never attempts any. Not a particle of 'evidence' is adduced."

And again:

"But we demur to this weak imagination (which only by courtesy can be called a 'theory') on every ground, and are constrained to remonstrate with our would-be guides at every step. They assume everything. They prove nothing. And the facts of the case lend them no favor at all."

Truly, that with which we are here dealing is not a theory, but a dream; a thing composed entirely of gratuitous assumptions, "destitute not only of proof, but even of probability."

Such is the clever device, the bit of intellectual legerdemain, whereby a group of scholars were persuaded to accept a single Ms. of the 4th century (for Dr. Hort rests practically his entire case upon the Codex Vaticanus) as being proof of an imaginary Text, supposedly more ancient than that which is acknowledged as "dominant" over wide areas *long* before *that copy was made.*

The following by Dean Burgon is worthy of particular notice:

"The one great *Fact* which especially troubles him (Dr. H.) and his joint editor (as well it may) is the *Traditional Greek Text* of the New Testament Scriptures. Call this text *Erasmian* or *Complutesian,* the text of *Stephens,* or of *Beza,* or of *the Elzevirs,* call it

the *Received* or the *Traditional,* or by whatever other name you please—the *fact* remains that *a text has come down to us which is attested by a general consensus of ancient Copies, ancient Fathers, and ancient Versions.* . . . Obtained from a variety of sources, this Text proves to be *essentially the same in all.* That it requires revision in respect of many of its lesser details is undeniable; but it is at least as certain that it is an excellent Text as it stands, and that the use of it will never lead critical students of the Scriptures seriously astray. In marked contrast with this (received) Text (which is identical with the Text of every extant Lectionary of the Greek Church) is that contained in a little handful of documents of which the most famous are the Codices Vaticanus and Sinaiticus."

The editors of the R. V. have systematically magnified the merits of those viciously corrupt manuscripts, while they have, at the same time, sedulously ignored their many glaring and scandalous defects and blemishes, manifestly determined, by right or by wrong, to establish their paramount authority, when it is in any way possible to do so. And when that is clearly impossible, then their purpose apparently is "to treat their errors as the ancient Egyptians treated their cats, dogs, monkeys, beetles, and other vermin, namely, to embalm them, and pay them divine honors. Such, for the last fifty years, has been the practice of the dominant school of textual criticism among ourselves."

Bishop Ellicott in Defence

But what have the Revisers themselves to say to all this? And how do they attempt to justify their conclusions and the methods whereby those conclusions were reached? Our readers will doubtless be asking these questions; and we are able to answer them in the most authoritative way, for the chairman of the Revision Committee, Bishop Ellicott, has himself put forth two replies to the criticisms of the R. V. published by Dean Burgon and others. One of Bishop Ellicott's papers appeared in 1882. The other was a matured defence, in the form of a book, "The Revised Version of Holy Scripture," published in 1901, just twenty years after the first edition of the R. V.

An examination of what Bishop Ellicott has thus put forth in defence of the work of his Committee tends to confirm, rather than to weaken, the objections we have herein advanced. Thus, in respect to the matter which we esteem of chief importance, that is to say, the adoption by the Committee of a "New Greek Text," which follows closely that of Westcott and Hort, Bishop Ellicott rests his case entirely upon the opinions of Lachmann, Tischendorf, and Tregelles, assuming their favorite principle of "ancient witnesses only" to be sound, and making no attempt whatever to meet the facts and arguments to the contrary, as urged by Scriv-

ener, Burgon, Cook, Beckett, Salmon, Malan, and others. Now the matter in dispute is precisely this, whether the guiding principle of Lachmann and his two successors, which had its spring in the school of German criticism, just then starting on its devastating career, is a sound and safe principle to follow? Bishop Ellicott, in both his published defences, *studiously avoids this issue.* When, therefore, we consider the tremendous attack made upon that critical principle by scholars of the first rank, and that Bishop Ellicott, in attempting to answer them, ignored that part of the case altogether, we are quite warranted in drawing the conclusion that the objections urged against that principle are unanswerable.

But more than that, Bishop Ellicott himself had urged in print *the very same objections* against the method of Lachmann and his modern school of textual criticism. For, in his work "On Revision" etc. (1870), the learned Bishop had declared that Lachmann's was "a Text composed on the narrowest and most exclusive principles;" that it was "really based on little more than four manuscripts." Moreover, concerning Tischendorf he had said: "The case of Tischendorf is still more easily disposed of. Which of this most inconstant critic's Texts are we to select? Surely not the last, in which *an exaggerated preference for a single manuscript* has betrayed him into *an almost childlike in-*

firmity of judgment." Tregelles also he had condemned in terms equally uncompromising. Yet, when the defence of the R. V. depended upon it, this learned scholar, who was—more than any other individual—responsible for the form finally given to it, can do no other or better than to appeal to the opinion of the very same modern and radical editors whose work he had himself previously declared to be unworthy of confidence.

At the time Bishop Ellicott's defence of 1882 was prepared, Westcott and Hort had just published their "New Greek Text," and the supporting "theory;" and so Bishop Ellicott sought to avail himself thereof, and did so by the plea that those who objected to the R. V. ought to meet that theory. He did not have to wait long; for Dean Burgon's smashing attack, strongly supported by the ablest textual critic of the day (Dr. Scrivener) and others, appeared about the same time. To all this Bishop Ellicott made no response (so far as we are aware) until in 1901 he published the book named above.

Turning to that volume we find that again he ignores entirely the main issue. Moreover, we find that now, instead of endorsing Dr. Hort, upon whom he leaned so hard in 1882, and by whom the whole Revision Committee was led astray, he virtually throws him overboard. For he cites a work of Dr. Salmon, of Trinity College, Dublin (1897), in which (to quote the

Bishop's own words) "the difficulties and anomalies and apparent perversities in the text of Westcott and Hort are compared with the decisions of the Revisers;" and he finds himself unable, as he admits, to "resist the conviction that Dr. Salmon, in his interesting Criticism of the Text of the New Testament, has successfully indicated three or more particulars which must cause some arrest in our final judgment on the Text of Westcott and Hort."

The three particulars which Bishop Ellicott points out, which are exceedingly important, are these (we quote the Bishop's own words):

"In the first place it cannot be denied that, in the introductory volume, Dr. Hort has shown too distinct a tendency to elevate probable hypotheses into the realm of established facts,"—which is just another way of saying that Dr. Hort depended upon guesswork, as Dean Burgon had pointed out in 1883.

"In the second place, in the really important matter of the nomenclature of the ancient types of Text . . . it does not seem possible to accept the titles of the four fold division of these families of manuscripts which has been adopted by Westcott and Hort. . . . The objections to this arrangement and to this nomenclature are, as Dr. Salmon very clearly shows, both reasonable and serious." So saying Bishop Ellicott throws overboard what (as we have shown above) is vital to Dr. Hort's theory.

"The third drawback to the unqualified acceptance of the Text of Westcott and Hort is their continuous and studied disregard of Western authorities. . . . To this grave drawback Dr. Salmon has devoted a chap-

ter to which the attention of the student may very profitably be directed. I am persuaded that, if there should be any fresh discovery of textual authorities, it is by no means unlikely that they may be of a 'Western' character, and if so, that many decisions in the Text of Westcott and Hort will have to be modified by some editor of the future. At any rate, taking the critical evidence as we now find it, we cannot but feel that Dr. Salmon has made out his case."

These admissions are creditable to the honesty and candor of the one who made them; but as regards their bearing upon the subject of our present inquiry, it seems clear that, considering how greatly to the interest of the Bishop and his cause it was to uphold the critical theories of Dr. Hort, and to maintain his authority as an editor, those admissions afford very strong reason indeed for the belief that Dean Burgon's drastic criticism of the Westcott and Hort Text, and of their "theory" as well, was fully warranted.

Bishop Ellicott advances the feeble plea, in extenuation of the undue influence which Dr. Hort exerted over the Revision Committee, that in only 64 passages did they accept the readings of Westcott and Hort where they had not "also the support of Lachmann, or Tischendorf, or Tregelles." This shows, upon the confession of the chairman of the Revision Committee, just what support can be claimed for the "New Greek Text." Hereby we are informed that it

rests sometimes on Westcott and Hort alone, but that it usually has the support of at least one of the three modern editors, each of whom has staked his all upon the viciously unsound principle of following exclusively the two depraved 4th Century Codices. Now, since we have Bishop Ellicott's own admission that these modern editors, each and all, are unreliable, it is not too much to say that the attempt to defend the R. V. has utterly collapsed, and that the objections of Dean Burgon and others remain indeed "unanswered and unanswerable."

A Comparison as to Style

In comparing the two Versions in respect to their literary merits, the Bishop of Lincoln, in a conference address, said:

"To pass from one to the other is, as it were, to alight from a well-built and well-hung carriage, which glides easily over a macadamized road, and to get into one which has bad springs or none at all, and in which you are jolted in ruts with aching bones, and over the stones of a newly mended and rarely traversed road."

And Dean Burgon has this to say:

"The A. V. should have been jealously retained wherever it was possible; but on the contrary every familiar cadence has been dislocated; the congenial flow of almost every verse of Scripture has been almost hopelessly marred. So many of those little con-

necting words, which give life and continuity to a narrative, have been vexatiously displaced, so that a perpetual sense of annoyance is created. The countless minute alterations, which have been needlessly introduced into every familiar page, prove at last as tormenting as a swarm of flies to a weary traveller on a summer's day. To speak plainly, the book has been made unreadable."

And Bishop Wordsworth expresses himself thus:

"I fear we must say in candor that in the Revised Version we meet in every page with small changes which are vexatious, teasing, and irritating, even the more so because they *are* small; which seem almost to be made for the sake of change."

And this is the view not of Bible scholars only. A writer in a recent number of a popular household magazine expresses, in the words that follow, what is undoubtedly the view of a great host of Bible readers. Speaking of one of the Modern Speech Versions she said:

"The one thing concerning it to which I object is that the sonorous sweep and beauty of the Bible are eliminated in an effort to be more literal in translation. So ingrained in my mentality is the King James Version that any word of change in it hits me like a blow."

Conclusion

What shall we then say to these things? Shall we accept the R. V. (either the English or Amer-

ican) as a substitute for the A. V.? That question, we take it, has been settled by the almost unanimous rejection of the modern Versions. But can we profitably avail ourselves of the R. V. for any purpose? The conclusion to which the facts constrain the writer of these pages is that—conceding that there are improvements (and perhaps many) in the R. V.,—nevertheless—the Greek Text upon which it is based is so corrupt, that it is not safe to accept any reading which differs from that of the A. V. until the reader has ascertained that the change in question is supported by preponderating testimony.

Furthermore, in the important matter of the work of Translation we believe it to be the consensus of the best opinion that, in this feature also, the Authorized Version is vastly superior to that of 1881.

And finally, as regards style and composition, the advantage is so greatly with the Old Version that it would be little short of a calamity were it to be supplanted by the R. V.

The Vox Populi

We say that the question whether or not the R. V. should supplant the A. V. has been settled by the people themselves who, for whatever reason or reasons, and whether influenced or not by the Spirit of God, have, and with increasing emphasis, rejected the New Version. Thus,

while the report of the British Bible Society for the year 1911 showed that about *four percent* (one out of 25) of the Bibles and Testaments issued by that Society in that year were of the R. V., the full report issued in 1920, shows that *less than two percent* (one out of 50) were of the R. V. The number of users of the R. V. therefore is not only small proportionately, but is dwindling. And of the few that are now called for a considerable proportion would be for reference and study only, and not for use.

THE BOOK OF BOOKS

As an appropriate conclusion to this volume we quote an editorial that appeared recently in a daily newspaper (*The Boston Herald,* Aug. 1, 1923), in which some striking facts concerning "the Bible" are put together (and let it be remembered that it is the A. V. which is here regarded as "the Bible"):—

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